■ **Sports / A22**

Iverson out for rest of NBA season

■ **News / A2**

Male sex worker accuses John O of rape

■ **Talk of the Town / A14**

Noli: I am my own man

■ **Metro / A20**

Death for Mark Chua killer

Tanong ng Bayan / **A20**

U-turn: Benepisyo o perhuwisyo?

ALAS-10 NG GABI

Dolphy says sorry; GMA accepts but comic still for FPJ

By Juliet L. Javellana and Marinel R. Cruz

DOLPHY: "I'm sorry … I'm sorry … I'm sorry."

President Macapagal-Arroyo: "I accept."

The President's campaign spokesperson Michael Defensor: "All's well that ends well."

Or is that really the end of it?

While the President said he forgave the co-

DOLPHY/ A4

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Campaigning militants try gay beauty contests

GAY beauty contests produced by militants? Believe it.

The campaign sorties of the party-list group Bayan Muna in the Davao region will be a complete pirouette … er, turnaround from its trademark fiery speeches.

CAMPAIGNING/ A18

ANO BA YAN? PURO KATA-TAWANAN!

email: feedback@inquirer.com.ph   Thursday, April 1, 2004   ★★★   48 pages / 4 sections / vol. 19 / no. 115   P18   website: www.inq7.net

DENNIS SABANGAN/EPA

WAR zone, or so the country's financial capital would appear to be as the PNP's SWAT (team) armed with M-16 rifles patrol the Glorietta premises.

Abu: We have long line of bombers

By Arlyn dela Cruz
Contributor

(First of two parts)

SPECIAL REPORT

THE ABU Sayyaf has warned of more bomb attacks around Metro Manila, saying it has a long line of trained bombers longing for "the eternal bliss of Paradise."

The claim by two senior leaders of the group, which has said it was responsible for the explosion and fire that killed over 100 people on the SuperFerry 14, coincided with the arrest by security forces of six suspected Abu Sayyaf members allegedly plotting to bomb trains and malls around the metropolis.

"*Nagulat din kami sa dami ng gustong magmartir, mahaba ang pila, hindi mauubusan* (Even we were surprised at how many want to be martyrs, the queue is long, we will not run out of bombers)," Abu Sayyaf Amir (spiritual leader) Khadaffy Janjalani told the INQUIRER yesterday.

The group's spokesperson and supposed "brains," Abu Soliman, said in a separate interview the SuperFerry 14 disaster on Manila Bay on Feb. 27 was a trial mission that turned out to be what he termed "a success."

Soliman, believed to be in his late 30s, was an original member of detained Moro rebel chief Nur Misuari's Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) and was also a part of the core group of the Abu Sayyaf in its founding years.

Next to Janjalani, he is considered to be the most important personality in the group.

One of the six suspects who were arrested at the weekend with 36 kilos of explosives, was reported to have told investigators he planted TNT in a television set on the ferry before escap-

ABU/ A8

Metro bomb targets listed

2 more Abu Sayyaf terror suspects fall

By Christian V. Esguerra, Alcuin Papa and Juliet Labog-Javellana

SECURITY forces yesterday tightened security around Metro Manila and arrested two more suspected Abu Sayyaf members allegedly involved in a plot to bomb trains and malls in the capital, including a big shopping center.

Besides the popular mall, the apparent potential targets of the bombers included the Pandacan oil depot near Malacañang, as well as stations of the Metro Rail Transit (MRT) and Light Rail Transit (LRT), a highly reliable security official told the INQUIRER.

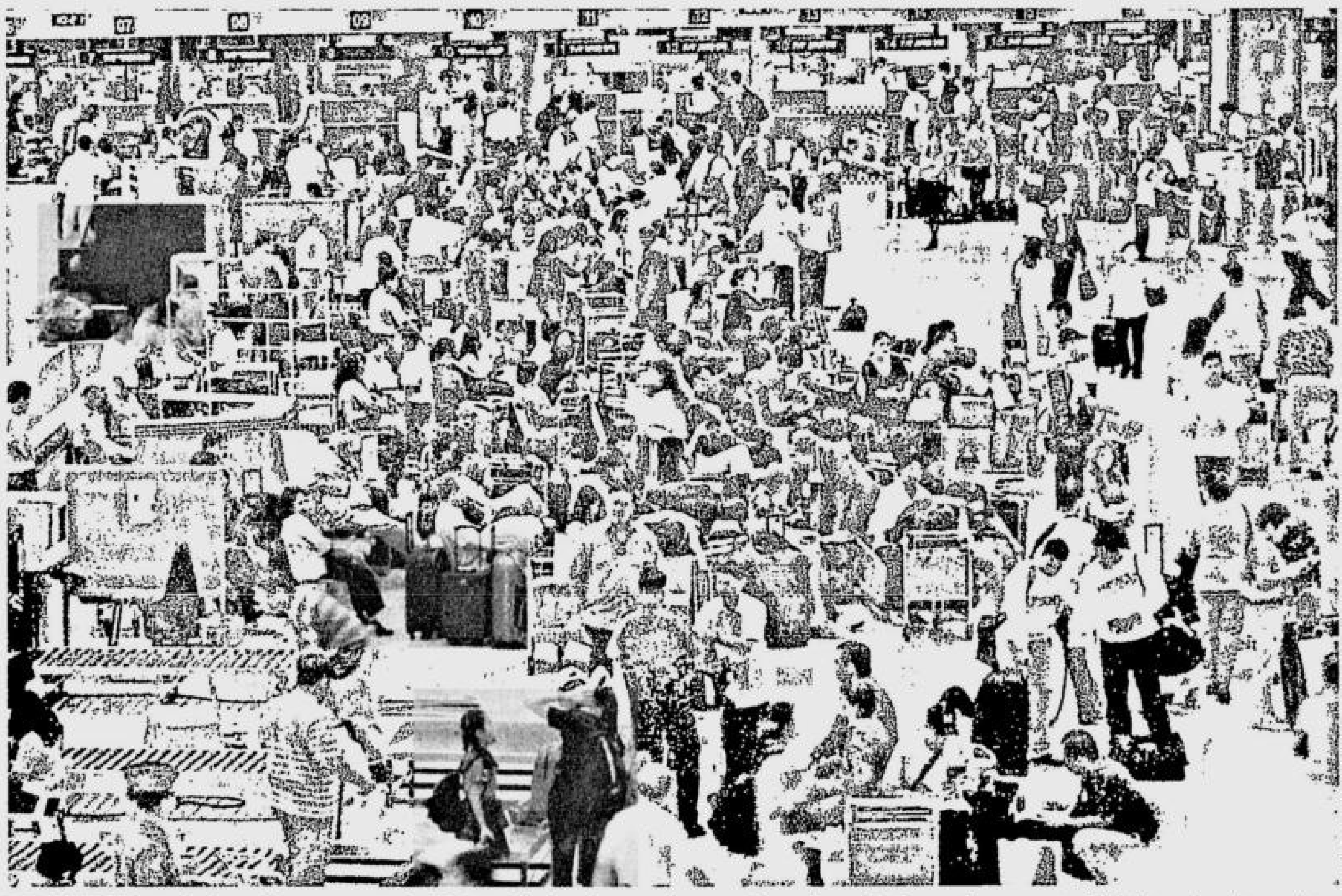
The supposed list of targets also identified personalities the Abu Sayyaf planned to kidnap in Metro Manila. Among them was the scion of a wealthy businessman, who was immediately warned about the plot, said the source, who asked not to be identified.

The latest arrests brought to six the number of alleged plotters belonging to an Abu Sayyaf cell who are now in custody. President Macapagal-Arroyo said the plot called for bombings on the scale of the recent bombings of commuter trains in Madrid, Spain, which killed almost 200 people.

Police said the prospective targets were listed on a piece of paper found in the wallet of Alhamsed Manatad Limbong, also known as "Kosovo," said to be the second cousin of Abu Sayyaf chieftain Khadaffy Janjalani and supposedly involved in the beheading in 2001 of American hostage Guillermo Sobero.

Chief Supt. Ismael Rafanan, police intelligence group director, said the list outlined several structures to be blown up but

METRO BOMB/ A8



DENNIS SABANGAN/EPA

DELAYED flight arrivals and departures at the Naia on Wednesday are due to prolonged security inspections as part of heightened antiterrorist measures now in place following the arrest of suspects reportedly involved in a plot to launch a Madrid-level attack on Metro Manila.

SC ruling sought on sects' vote

By Philip C. Tubeza

IS IT constitutional for religious leaders to influence their followers' vote in the May elections?

The answer will be known after the Supreme Court set for oral arguments the petition of Bro. Mike Velarde seeking to reverse a Manila court ruling that declared unconstitutional the endorsement of candidates by religious leaders.

In an en banc resolution, the Supreme Court scheduled the oral arguments for April 13 at 11 a.m. in the Session Hall of its compound in Baguio City, where the justices are having their regular summer session.

Velarde heads the influential Catholic charismatic group, El Shaddai, whose support is avidly sought by candidates come election time. He challenged the Manila court's ruling because it allegedly violated the constitutional guarantee of freedom of religion.

The other respondents in the original case were former Manila Archbishop Jaime Cardinal Sin, Iglesia ni Cristo Executive Minister Eraño Manalo, Ang Dating Daan head Bro. Eli Soriano and evangelical leader and presidential candidate Bro. Eddie Villanueva.

Manalo's INC practices bloc vot-

SC RULING/ A4

MWSS exec offers to tell all about Maynilad deal

By Michael Lim Ubac and Christine Gaylican

A RANKING official of the state-run Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System has reportedly offered to tell all about the controversial MWSS plan to take over the debt-saddled Maynilad Water Services from the Lopezes.

The official was willing to turn state witness in the graft and plunder case lodged against President Macapagal-Arroyo, other ranking government officials and owners of Benpres Holdings in connection with the takeover, senatorial candidate Melanio "Batas" Mauricio said yesterday.

Under Republic Act No. 7975, criminal charges can be filed against the President but these can proceed against Ms Macapagal only after her term of office.

Benpres said there was no government bailout because the Lopez group was writing off its equity investment of $80 million in Maynilad. Under the proposed deal, the MWSS would acquire 63 percent of Maynilad, but it would have to shoulder the P8 billion in unpaid concession fees by Maynilad and the utility's bridge loans amounting to $39 million.

The deal also calls for the reprivatization of Maynilad in three to five years.

"I think he (witness) holds the proverbial smoking gun," said Mauricio, who stressed that based on the documents shown to him, the official knew the ins and outs of both Maynilad and the MWSS.

Asked about the significance of the information from the witness who had a stint at Maynilad before he transferred to the MWSS, Mauricio said: "He will provide a testimony that will show that the MWSS was acting pursuant to a higher directive."

"That's why despite warnings aired by an MWSS legal consultant and (a former head of) the National Economic and Development Authority (Neda), the MWSS is still pushing through with the deal," he said.

Mauricio was referring to MWSS legal consultant Leonardo Amores, who issued a memo dated March 16, 2004 that warned the MWSS that the proposed deal violated the Anti-Graft Law.

Amores said he "could not find any suitable or even miniscule ground to justify the approval by the MWSS of the proposed plan submitted by Maynilad for its rehabilitation."

MWSS/ A8

PHILS:
Q
JOKER
GMA's SOURCE of CAMPAIGN FUNDS
GMA's SOURCE: STANLEY HO CASINO at PA MILKING CC NI GMA PARA ELEKSYON
CAMPAIGN FUNDS

ERIK ARAZAS

BUSTED
The Student Christian Movement holds a rally in Mendiola to protest the alleged entry into the country of Stanley Ho and his gambling empire in exchange for campaign funds for President Macapagal.

High court dismisses Roa-Rasul petition

By Philip C. Tubeza

ONE down.

The Supreme Court has dismissed the petition of two opposition senatorial candidates to declare President Macapagal-Arroyo resigned or on official leave for allegedly using government resources for her election campaign.

In a six-page en banc resolution dated March 30, the tribunal dismissed the petition of Koalisyon ng Nagkakaisang Pilipino candidates Ma. Elisa "Boots" Anson-Roa and Amina Rasul-Bernardo for lack of jurisdiction and cause of action.

The tribunal also said it had no jurisdiction to rule on the petition that Ms Macapagal be replaced by Vice President Teofisto Guingona Jr. It said the Commission on Elections had primary jurisdiction over the President's alleged violation of election laws.

"There is simply no basis under the Constitution or any law that supports a cause of action to compel the President in this case to resign or go on leave by virtue of her running for the presidency," the Supreme Court said, adding:

"Our fundamental law allows her to run for President and remain as President with all the concomitant powers and duties of that office."

Rasul and Roa had also asked the high court to order Executive Secretary Alberto Romulo to stop implementing the President's orders; National Treasurer Mina Figueroa to

HIGH COURT/ A18

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: The whole country will experience partly cloudy to at times cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers or thunderstorms mostly over Mindanao.

SOURCE: PAGASA

COMPILED BY: RAY LEYESA, PDI RESEARCH/04/01/04

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Iloilo/Bacolod	Partly Cloudy
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Roxas	Partly Cloudy
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	Cebu	Partly Cloudy
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	Tacloban	Partly Cloudy
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Partly Cloudy
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Partly Cloudy
Legazpi	Partly Cloudy	Cagayan de Oro	Partly Cloudy
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	Davao	Partly Cloudy

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Second FRONTPAGE

FPJ goes to Ping Lacson territory

By Christine O. Avendaño and Norman Bordadora

MOVIE actor Fernando Poe Jr. yesterday asked the Filipino-Chinese community to help him land his biggest role yet—as president of the Philippines.

Speaking before Fil-Chinese associations in Binondo, Manila, Poe said he has played the role of soldier, policeman, priest and even sword-maker.

"*Ang hindi ko pa nagagampanan ay isang presidente. Kaya kayo ang bahala kung gusto ninyo gampanan ko eto* (I have not yet played the role of president. It's up to you if you want me to play the role)," Poe said at a gathering at the President's Restaurant in Binondo organized by Manila Rep. Harry Angping.

Before speaking to Fil-Chinese associations, Poe with his wife, actress Susan Roces, led Koalisyon ng Nagkakaisang Pilipino candidates in a motorcade around Binondo. This time though, Poe and Roces rode on a *calesa*, stopping traffic for a few minutes.

Poe told reporters that the Fil-Chinese community is worried about the peace and order situation in the country, particularly the incidents of kidnapping. If he wins the presidency, he intends to solve these problems.

Poe, Roces and KNP candidates went to Binondo yesterday to court the vote of the Fil-Chinese community, said to be solidly behind presidential candidate Sen. Panfilo "Ping" Lacson.

Members of the Fil-Chinese associations, however, refused to comment when reporters asked them whether they will support Poe's presidency.

This is in sharp contrast to the overwhelming support of the Fil-Chinese community who attended Monday's fund-raiser dinner for Sen. Panfilo Lacson at the Century Seafood Restaurant in Malate, Manila, which reportedly netted P10.5 million.

More than 1,000 supporters, many whose family members were rescued from kidnapping syndicates by Lacson when he was still PNP chief, contributed P10,000 for their dinner and to Lacson's campaign kitty.

This dispelled rumors that the senator would eventually slide down in favor of KNP standard-bearer Poe in a united opposition slate.

Lacson's lone senatorial candidate Nueva Vizcaya Rep. Carlos Padilla said that Monday night's fund raiser was more successful than Poe's fund-raising luncheon in the Binondo district.

"In Poe's luncheon at Ongpin, there were 40 tables reserved. They were filled, but half by entertainers. In our case, we had more than 100 tables and all of them were filled—without entertainers," Padilla said.

The dinner also attracted representatives from big business including Philippines, Inc. president Miguel Varela, Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry chief Sergio Ortiz-Luis and former Federation of Filipino Chinese Chambers of Commerce and Industry president Jimmy Tang.

John O accused of rape, cries foul

A 24-YEAR-OLD male who confessed to be a sex worker surfaced and accused yesterday administration senatorial candidate John Osmeña of "raping" him in a popular resort in Tagaytay City in February.

Osmeña's media staff chief Eliseo Maraon quickly dismissed the charges as "plain and simple harassment."

"The motive is questionable especially this time of campaign," Maraon told the INQUIRER. "We are still ascertaining the people behind this demolition job."

In a complaint filed with the Tagaytay municipal trial court, Diego Gomez said he agreed to meet with Osmeña, whom he described as a regular customer, on Feb. 5. He identified the reelectionist senator in his affidavit as "Mike."

Gomez told GMA's *24 Oras* that Osmeña agreed that they would use condom and not engage in anal sex. However, Gomez claimed, Osmeña violated their agreement when the senator allegedly forced his finger into his anus.

According to Gomez, Osmeña even handcuffed him to the bedpost when he felt dizzy after a shot of Scotch.

In Cebu, Vice Gov. John Gregory Osmeña came to the defense of his father, saying that politics was behind this "dirty campaign."

"My dad is 69 years old. Knowing my father all my life, he's not violent by nature," said the vice governor.

The younger Osmeña said the allegations against his father were obviously politically motivated aimed at ruining his reelection bid under the administration's Koalisyon ng Katapatan at Karanasan para sa Kinabukasan (Coalition of Experience and Truth for the Future), or K-4.

The Progressive Organization of Gays in the Philippines (ProGay) yesterday asked for sobriety from the public amidst the media frenzy over the rape charges filed against Osmeña by a supposed victim.

Michael Urbano, spokesperson for ProGay, said sensational reports tend to worsen the feelings of homophobia among Filipinos, who traditionally think of male homosexuals as predators and exploiters.

"We feel sad that gays are again being scandalized and political opponents are using homosexuality issues to attack each other," Urbano said in a statement.

"So many straight politicians are dragged into sex scandals, yet their heterosexual excesses are not questioned." he added. *Michael Lim Ubac, Manila, Jolene R. Bulambot, PDI Visayas Bureau, Joel Francis Guinto*

'Tapos na ang boksing,' says defector

EXPECT more local officials from administration coalition K-4 under President Macapagal-Arroyo to move over to the camp of opposition presidential bet Fernando Poe Jr. of the Koalisyon ng Nagkakaisang Pilipino (KNP) soon.

Negros Occidental Rep. Apolinario "Jun" Lozada, who himself abandoned the ruling Lakas-Christian Muslim Democrats to join Poe, announced the move yesterday, saying the defection earlier of 90 local candidates from the Lakas-Muslim-Christian Democrats, the Nationalist People's Coalition and the Liberal Party was just the beginning of a massive political realignment.

"*Tapos na ang boksing*. (The game's over). Fernando Poe Jr. is the next president of the Republic," Lozada said.

Poe spokesperson Rep. Francis Escudero confirmed the plan, saying that the 90 new supporters comprised only the first batch. "More batches will follow soon not only from the NPC, but from other parties," he claimed.

Five NPC members in Cebu—Representatives Jose Gullas, Simeon Kintanar, Antonio Yapha, Joseph Durano, and Nerissa Soon-Ruiz—however, said they are staying with the administration coalition.

"While there is no addition to our side, no one has gotten out also," said Durano, also NPC secretary general, who has belittled their colleagues' move. "It's just a formality. Those who left have been supportive of Poe ever since," he said.

Only Rep. Clavel Asas-Martinez of Cebu's 4th district is not with the NPC, although she is supporting Ms Macapagal. Martinez is running for reelection under the Independent Masa with her husband former Agriculture Assistant Secretary Celestino Martinez who is seeking the governor's seat.

Lozada said the dilemma of many local politicians supporting the President was that their constituents were behind Poe. "Although they are for the administration candidates, how can they ignore the clamor of their constituents?" he asked.

Poe would get more votes than his bosom buddy, ousted President Erap Estrada, he said. *Cynthia D. Balana, Jhunnex Napallacan, Carla P. Gomez, Ferdinand O. Zuasola, Jeffrey M. Tupas, Carlito Pablo*

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Casino king, Pagcor deny gambling deal in RP

HONG KONG—Macau casino magnate Stanley Ho yesterday said he has no plans to invest in gaming in the Philippines, after a visit last week triggered media reports that he was building a gambling business in the country.

A statement from his Hong Kong-listed Shun Tak Holdings Ltd. said that Ho, one of Asia's richest men, was in the Philippines on March 22 to receive an honorary doctorate from the Angeles University Foundation in Angeles, Pampanga.

"Dr Ho does not now have any gambling business in the Philippines, nor does he have any intention of investing in any gambling-related business there," said the statement sent late on Tuesday.

Ho, whose 42-year-old Macau gaming empire lost its monopoly status in 2002, operated casinos in the Philippines before he was forced to pull out of the country when dictator Ferdinand Marcos lost power in 1986.

Sources in the Philippines said last week that Ho already has a hand in several gaming ventures in the country.

Newspapers also reported that Ho met with President Macapagal-Arroyo, and received permission to invest in a casino in the Clark Special Economic Zone, the United States air base in Angeles, Pampanga.

Ho's statement said that he did not meet with Ms Macapagal during his stay, nor did he meet with anyone from the state-owned Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp. (Pagcor), which has a monopoly on legal gambling in the country.

The chair of Pagcor, Efraim C. Genuino, yesterday denied having entered into any agreement or negotiations with Ho for the establishment of casinos in the Philippines.

In a press statement, Genuino said he has never received any proposal from Ho about the setting up of gaming-related business ventures in the country.

He said Pagcor's satellite casino in the new Hyatt Manila (not the Sheraton Marina as earlier reported) was being leased by Pagcor not from Ho but from Marina Square Properties Inc. which is owned by business magnate Cheng Yu Tung. Cheng also owns the Grand Hyatt chain of hotels in Hong Kong.

He also said there was no pending application from Ho for the establishment of a theme park at Clark. *Reuters*

Senate bet injured

By Christine O. Avendaño

ROXAS CITY—Opposition senatorial candidate Salvador Escudero yesterday dislocated his right elbow when he slipped after a luncheon news conference at a restaurant in New Washington, Aklan.

In pain and with his elbow swelling, Escudero, who was with the Koalisyon ng Nagkakaisang Pilipino in its campaign sortie here, was brought to the Iloilo Doctors Hospital.

The accident happened inside a toilet at the Sampaguita Gardens in New Washington, where the KNP candidates held a news conference.

KNP senatorial candidate Ernesto Maceda said that Escudero fell apparently because he was in a hurry to leave.

The senatorial candidate was then taken to the Aklan Provincial hospital where doctors found out that he had dislocated his right arm.

But despite the accident, Escudero remained in high spirits, according to KNP Vice presidential candidate Sen. Loren Legarda and other KNP senatorial candidates who rushed to the hospital with him.

"He seemed to have a very high level of tolerance because in fact he was joking that even with his dislocated arm ... he joked that he was still capable of writing the name of FPJ in the ballot," KNP senatorial candidate Boots Anson Roa told reporters.

"His injury is not serious but he's in pain," was how KNP senatorial candidate Francisco Tatad described Escudero's condition.

Tatad said the accident would affect Escudero's senatorial campaign "for the next couple of days" as the latter is expected to recuperate from his injury.

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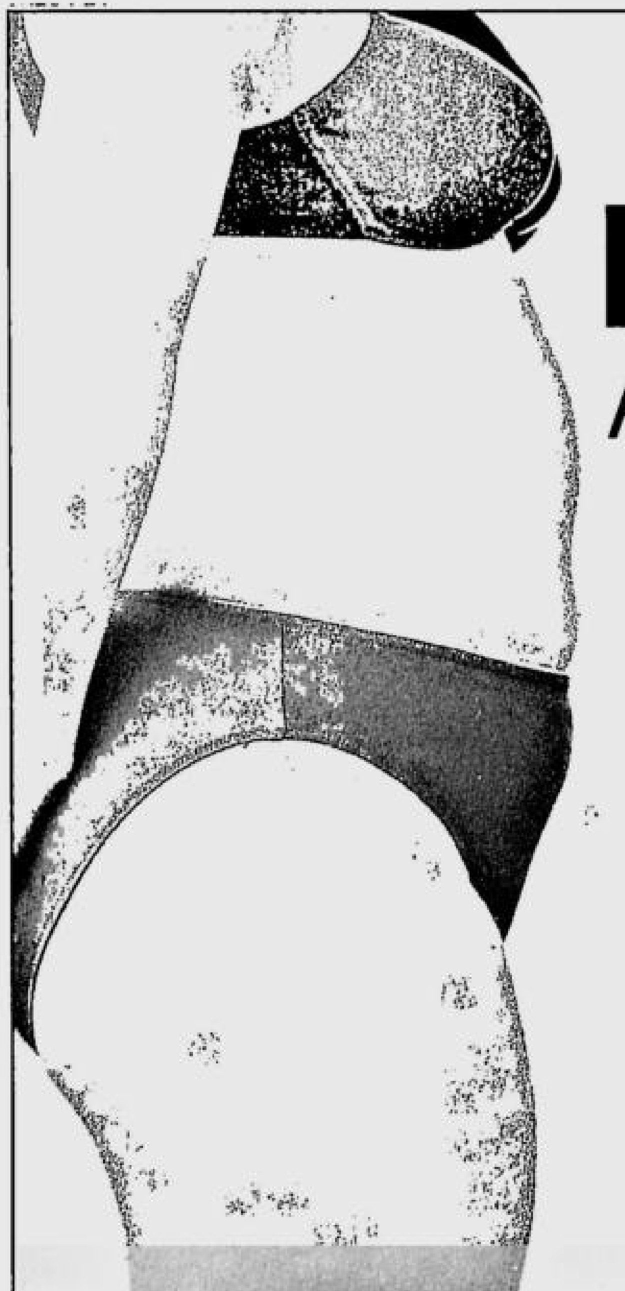

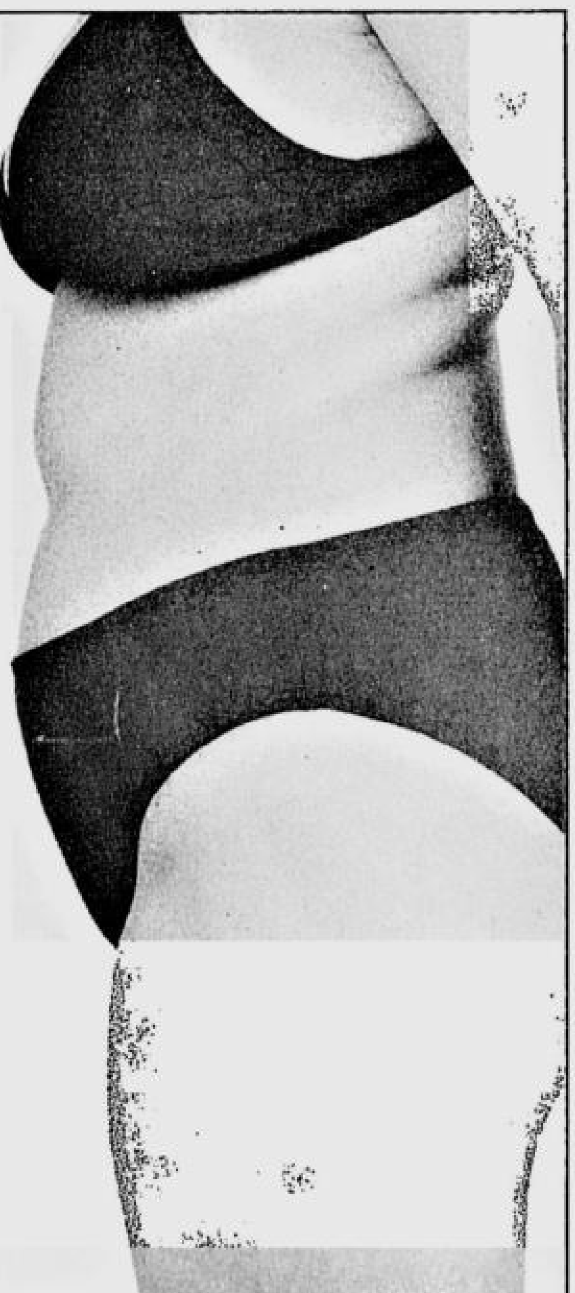

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THE DAILY GOSPEL

Thursday, April 1, 2004
5th Week of Lent

1st Reading: Gen 17:3-9
Gospel: Jn 8:51-59

Jesus said to the Jews, "Truly, I say to you, if anyone keeps my word, he will never experience death." The Jews replied, "Now we know that you have a demon. Abraham died and the prophets as well, but you say: 'Whoever keeps my word will never experience death.' Who do you claim to be? Do you claim to be greater than our father Abraham, who died? And the prophets also died."

Then Jesus said, "If I were to praise myself, it would count for nothing. But he who gives glory to me is the Father, the very one you claim as your God, although you don't know him. I know him and if I were to say that I don't know him, I would be a liar like you. But I know him and I keep his word.

"As for Abraham, your ancestor, he looked forward to the day when I would come; and he rejoiced when he saw it."

The Jews then said to him, "You are not yet fifty years old and you have seen Abraham?" And Jesus said "Truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I am." They then picked up stones to throw at him, but Jesus hid himself and left the Temple.

Commentary

In Genesis 17:17 Abraham, who was a hundred years old, "fell on his face and laughed" when God told him he was to have a son. This laughter was interpreted by Jews as joy that he had seen the beginning of the messianic "day": that is, that the Messiah would one day be born of his line. Fifteen to twenty centuries later Jesus said, "Abraham rejoiced that he would see my day." After all those questions about his identity, this is his clear statement that he is the Messiah, the Promised One. More: he said, "Before Abraham was, I am." This echoes God's revelation of his name to Moses, "God said to Moses, I AM WHO I AM. This is what you are to say to the Israelites: 'I AM has sent me to you'" (Ex 3:14). This is Jesus' clearest claim to divinity in the gospel. It brings to a head all the questions about his identity in the preceding passages. His statement was not lost on his hearers, who took up stones to kill him for blasphemy.

Before Abraham was, "I am," not "I was." This was a moment "out of time," to use T.S. Eliot's phrase. Ordinary grammar buckles under the strain, past present and future tenses fuse into one. Many centuries later Julian of Norwich would say, mysteriously, "I saw God in a point."

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SUPREME COURT DOCTRINES

CRIMINAL LAW (AGGRAVATING CIRCUMSTANCES)—Intimidation—Intimidation must be viewed in light of the victim's perception and judgment at the time of the commission of the crime and not by any hard and fast rule. It suffices that the threat or intimidation produces a reasonable fear in the mind of the victim that if she resists or does not yield to the desires of appellant, the threat would be carried out. Jonalyn's explanation is not difficult to appreciate, given her claim that appellant had been cruel and often maltreated her, her siblings and her mother, which claim was confirmed at the witness stand by her mother who added that they could not get back at appellant because "if he had with him a bolo, he unsheathed his bolo." [Citations omitted.] [En Banc, Per Curiam, People vs Madera, G. R. Nos. 138662-63, November 4, 2003] BY R. B. VERA

SC ruling sought on sects' vote

From page A1

ing. Sin was instrumental in rallying support for the assumption to power of former President Corazon Aquino and incumbent President Macapagal-Arroyo.

El Shaddai supported Joseph Estrada in the last presidential elections, allowing him to win handily. Estrada, however, was ousted two years later over plunder charges.

Velarde also challenged the legal standing of the Social Justice Society (SJS) party, which initiated the case in the Manila court.

On June 27, Manila Judge Concepcion S. Alarcon-Vergara ruled that the head of a religious organization, who "influences or threatens to punish" members, could be held liable for coercion for violating a citizen's right to vote freely.

Bloc voting a doctrine

While Velarde has gone directly to the Supreme Court, Manalo went to the Court of Appeals to ask that Vergara's decision be overturned.

Manalo said Vergara acted with "grave abuse of discretion" in issuing the decision which was favorable to the SJS.

More importantly, Manalo's lawyer Restituto Lazaro noted, the SJS petition affected one of the doctrines of the INC, which encourages bloc voting by its followers.

"After all, as Filipino citizens, INC members likewise enjoy the right of suffrage. As to how they should exercise such right is a matter no one in a free and democratic country like ours can validly question," Lazaro said.

Sin had also defended before the Supreme Court his right to make known his "favorite" candidates during elections.

In a seven-page comment on Velarde's petition, Sin, through his lawyer Maria Liza A. Lopez-Rosario, told the tribunal that he and other religious leaders like him enjoyed the constitutionally guaranteed freedom of speech.

"This constitutional right cannot and should not be curtailed on the basis of an unfounded fear and under the guise of a violation of the principle of the separation of the Church and State," Rosario said.

"It should be remembered that while Cardinal Sin, Minister Manalo, Brother Villanueva, Brother Soriano and petitioner Velarde are religious leaders, they are still citizens of the Republic of the Philippines whose freedom of speech is guaranteed and protected by the supreme law of the land, the Constitution," the lawyer said.

No actual case

Rosario noted that Sin had not endorsed any candidate in the coming elections.

"While it is true that in the past elections, the Cardinal gave advice or opinion as to what are the qualities that the candidate should possess, this should not automatically be interpreted as partisan politics," she said.

"There is no election yet and the claim of SJS that His Eminence and the other original respondents have been actively involved in partisan politics is merely based on conjectures," Rosario added.

Like his fellow religious leaders, Sin maintained that the SJS petition had no basis because there was no actual controversy that the courts could decide on.

"A careful scrutiny of the SJS petition for declaratory relief shows that there is yet no actual case or controversy involving all or any of the original private respondents on one hand, and respondent SJS on the other, at the time that the petition was filed in January, 2003," Rosario said.

In her June, 2003, decision, Judge Alarcon-Vergara agreed with the SJS that religious leaders, who endorsed political candidates for election, were violating the constitutional provisions on the separation of the Church and State.

If religious leaders were proved to be campaigning for or against any candidate in an election contest, they could be violating Republic Act No. 7890, according to the judge.

12 years in prison

The provision states that any administrator of any religious organization, who influences or threatens to punish any of his subordinates or members to vote for or against any candidate, can be guilty of coercion of subordinates.

The judge emphasized that RA 7890 provided that if the coercion was committed in violation of the people's right to vote, the leaders would be penalized with up to 12 years' imprisonment.

But Vergara said she had no power to stop religious leaders from influencing their flock because her decision was only an interpretation and clarification of constitutional provisions.

Congress, according to her, has to enact laws that will give teeth to the constitutional provision. "The Constitution is but a general principle on the subject, but it does not lay down specific rules," she said.

Dolphy ...

From page A1

median for saying she was "*dugay na sa Malacañang, tonto pa gihapon* (still dumb after a long time in Malacañang)," she also made it clear: "It doesn't remove the fact that the opposition has no platform to speak of, even for the movie industry."

And Dolphy made it just as clear: "*Kay FPJ pa rin ako* (I'm still for Fernando Poe Jr.)."

On Tuesday night, in an interview on "TV Patrol," ABS-CBN's 6 p.m. news program, Dolphy apologized rather profusely—saying "I'm sorry" at least three times—for the controversial remark that he delivered during the Cebu City grand rally of Poe's Koalisyon ng Nagkakaisang Pilipino.

Ms Macapagal accepted the apology during a party given in her honor later that same evening by Speaker Jose De Venecia's wife, Gina.

In the TV interview with reporter Mario Dumaual, Dolphy said he was only joking during the rally on March 27. "I would never disrespect the President," he said emphatically in Filipino.

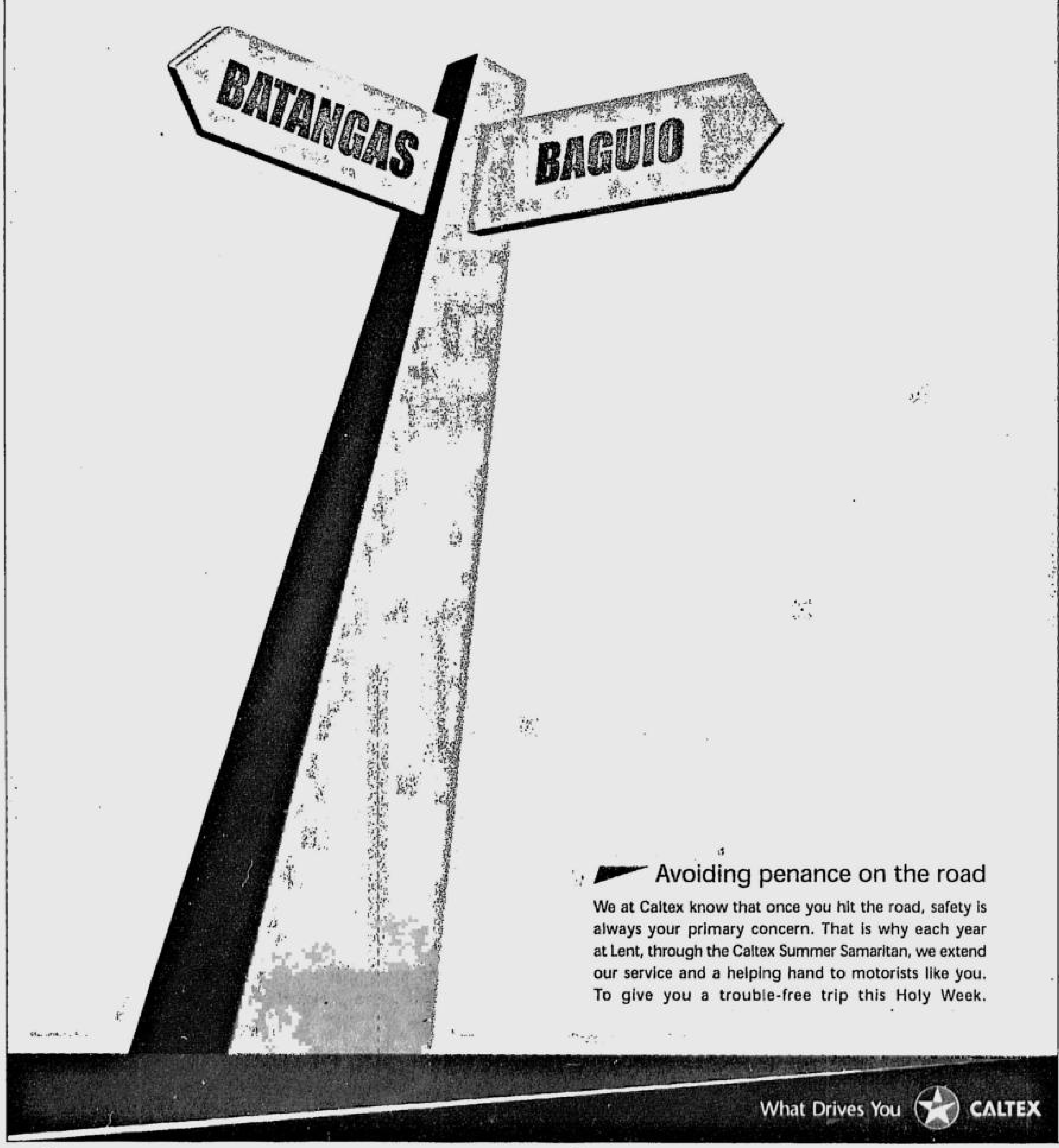
Dumaual said the conversation took place between 1:30 p.m. and 3 p.m. on Tuesday at Dolphy's home in Marina Bay on Roxas Boulevard, Pasay City. Singer Zsa Zsa Padilla, the comedian's partner, was present, he said.

The resulting three-minute footage was aired minutes before the end of the news program. Pausing for a commercial break, one of the hosts asked as a teaser, "*Susuportahan pa kaya ni* Dolphy *si* FPJ? *Abangan sa pagbabalik* (Would Dolphy still support FPJ? We'll be right back) ..."

But when the program resumed, it moved on to another story. An INQUIRER source yesterday said Dolphy's reiterated support for his actor-buddy was edited out.

Dumaual explained the portion had been abruptly cut due to time constraints, but the full interview aired at 11 p.m. on the news feature program "Insider."

The reporter was sure "there was nothing to it."



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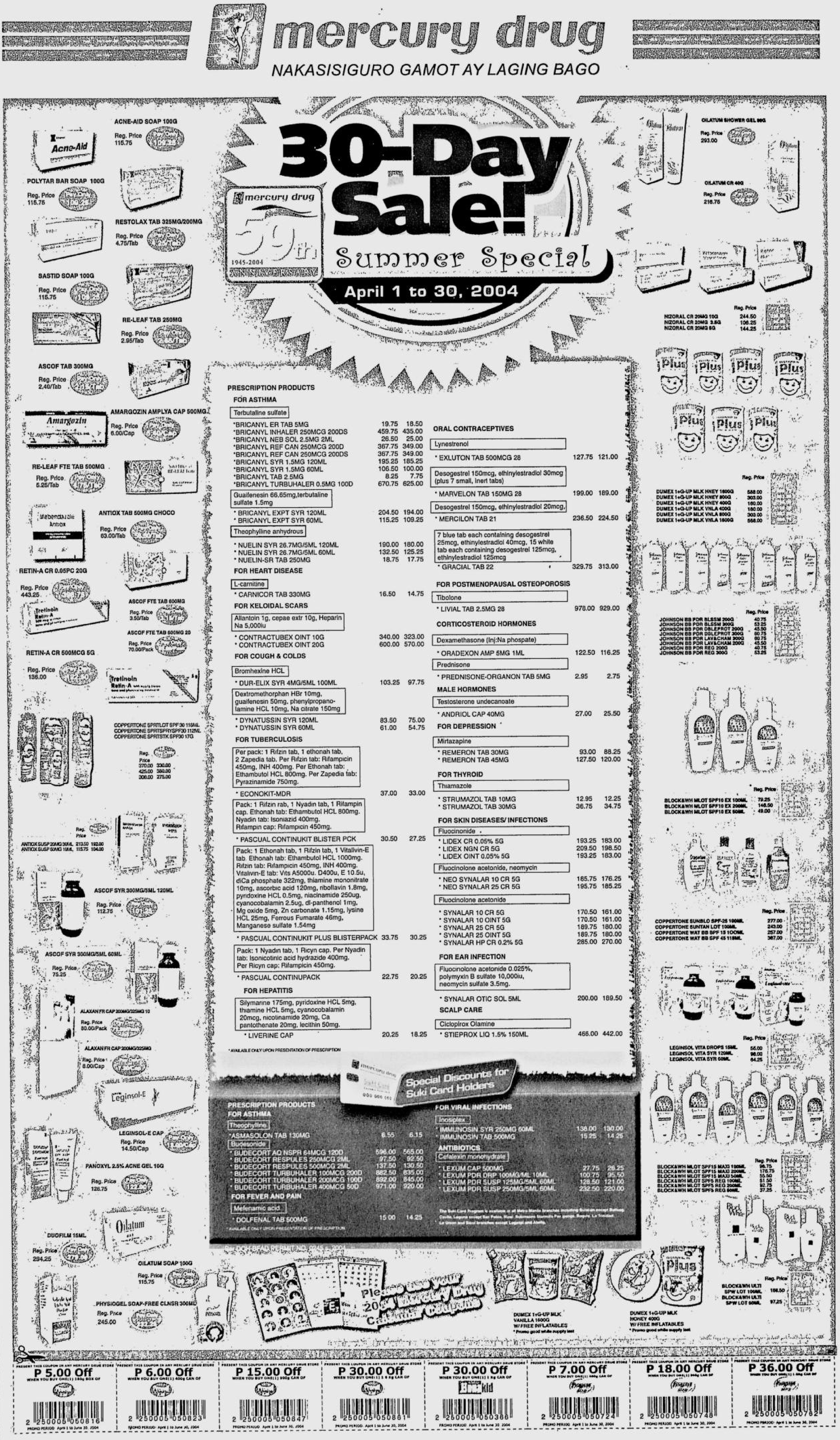

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$624M Marcos loot now in gov't hands

By Volt Contreras

SOME $624 million in forfeited Swiss deposits of the late strongman Ferdinand Marcos is now with the Bureau of Treasury and set to be used for the land reform program, Agrarian Reform Secretary Jose Mari Ponce said yesterday.

But there's still one major hurdle left: Converting a bulk of the amount into ready cash.

Ponce said that only $1.42 million of the $624 million was in cash, while the rest were invested in bonds worth $598.13 million and stocks worth $23.337 million. Another $9.57 million represented accrued interest, he said.

According to Ponce, Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR) is planning to meet with Treasury officials to discuss how the stocks and bonds can be converted to cash.

He said the department had been seeking the cooperation of big land owners with the transfer of the Marcos money held in escrow account in the Philippine National Bank.

Ponce noted that many land owners had been "reluctant" to give up their properties "because of fears the government may not be able to compensate them promptly."

"With assured funds, this fear will be abated," he said.

Ponce said 70 percent of DAR's share from the Marcos fund would go to land acquisition and distribution, while 30 percent would be spent on social services benefiting farmers or on agricultural assistance projects.

Earlier, the DAR chief disclosed plans to explore the possibility of tapping the assets of the Presidential Commission on Good Government, now worth P23.55 billion, to augment land reform funds.

This potential source of additional funds is separate from the recovered Marcos wealth, according to Ponce.

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10 MOST CORRUPT

Erap got what he wanted, says lawyer

By Armand N. Nocum

OUSTED president Estrada has always sought special treatment befitting his position as a former head of state.

Estrada's having been tagged as the world's 10th most corrupt chief executive has finally brought him the eminence he has sought, state prosecutors said yesterday.

Estrada, who is in jail on plunder and graft charges, ranked 10th in the UK-based Transparency International's list of the world's Ten Most Corrupt Leaders in its Global Corruption Report for 2004.

Transparency International, a non-government organization devoted to combating corruption, brings together civil society, business and governments together in a powerful global coalition.

"Now he is in the same league as world-class grafters," said Special Prosecutor Dennis Villa-Ignacio.

Villa-Ignacio noted that since his arrest, Estrada has done everything to set himself up above all Filipinos, "from asking that he be treated above the law to being given house arrest, a custodial accommodation not provided by law."

In asking that he be allowed to stay in his house in San Juan and then in his rest house in Tanay, Rizal, Estrada has pointed out that other former world leaders have been accorded special treatment, often citing the case of Indonesia's ousted president Suharto.

Suharto, who allegedly stole $15 billion to $35 billion, ranked first in the TI list. The late dictator Ferdinand Marcos came in second, with some $5 billion to $10 billion in embezzled money.

The TI said Estrada allegedly took $78 million to $80 million for himself in the three years that he was President.

"He finally got his wish to be at par with Suharto," said Villa-Ignacio.

Other leaders included in the corrupt list were the former leaders of Zaire, Mobuto Sese Seko; Nigeria's Sani Abacha; Servia's Slobodan Milosevic; Haiti's Jean-Claude Duvalier; and Peru's Alberto Fujimori.

Estrada and his actor buddy Fernando Poe Jr., who is the main opposition candidate for President, have branded the report as "wrong" and "unfair," saying the plunder case was still being heard and Estrada was not yet convicted of the crime.

Estrada claimed that the TI may have used the amount contained in the Jose Velarde account ascribed to him but which he said belonged to Jaime Dichaves, one of his business cronies.

Documents from the Jose Velarde account were contained in the so-called second envelope presented by bank officials during Estrada's aborted impeachment trial.

Estrada said the TI had no basis to conclude that he stole up to $80 million and dismissed the IT report as a "smear campaign."

Villa-Ignacio said Poe may have gotten the facts of the case wrong. He pointed to a March 17 resolution of the court which rejected the defense lawyers' motion not to present evidence for Estrada, arguing that the prosecution had failed to present substantial evidence to pin Estrada down.

In its recent "joint resolution," the Sandiganbayan special division under its chair, Presiding Justice Minita Nazario, said there was "prima facie evidence" against Estrada and that unless he presents evidence in his defense, Estrada might be convicted by the prosecution's evidence.

"In fine, the evidence, at present, establishes a prima facie case against the movant. The term 'prima facie evidence' denotes evidence which, if unexplained or unopposed, is sufficient to sustain the proposition it supports or to establish the facts or counterbalance the presumption of innocence," the court said.

It added that unless the prosecution's evidence was "rebutted or explained by evidence, it becomes conclusive, and is to be considered fully proved."

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1. We commend and congratulate Fernando Poe, Jr. as our undisputed action star and is the king;
2. We commend and congratulate Ping Lacson as our super cop gifted with a "kamay na bakal";
3. We commend and congratulate Raul Roco as the best and outstanding senator during his tenure;
4. We commend and congratulate Bro. Eddie Villanueva for his outstanding spiritual uprightness;
5. We will vote for Gloria Macapagal Arroyo for a fresh mandate of her own as president of our beloved republic who, as a mortal like all of us may not be perfect (Who among our four Macho Presidentiables can claim that he is 100% perfect?) But is the best alternative due to her immutable intellectual prowess with a proven indefatigable and tested leadership duly acknowledged everywhere and highly respected by the international community of nations which augurs well for foreign investors, a centerpoint in the solution to our no. 1 problem : poverty !
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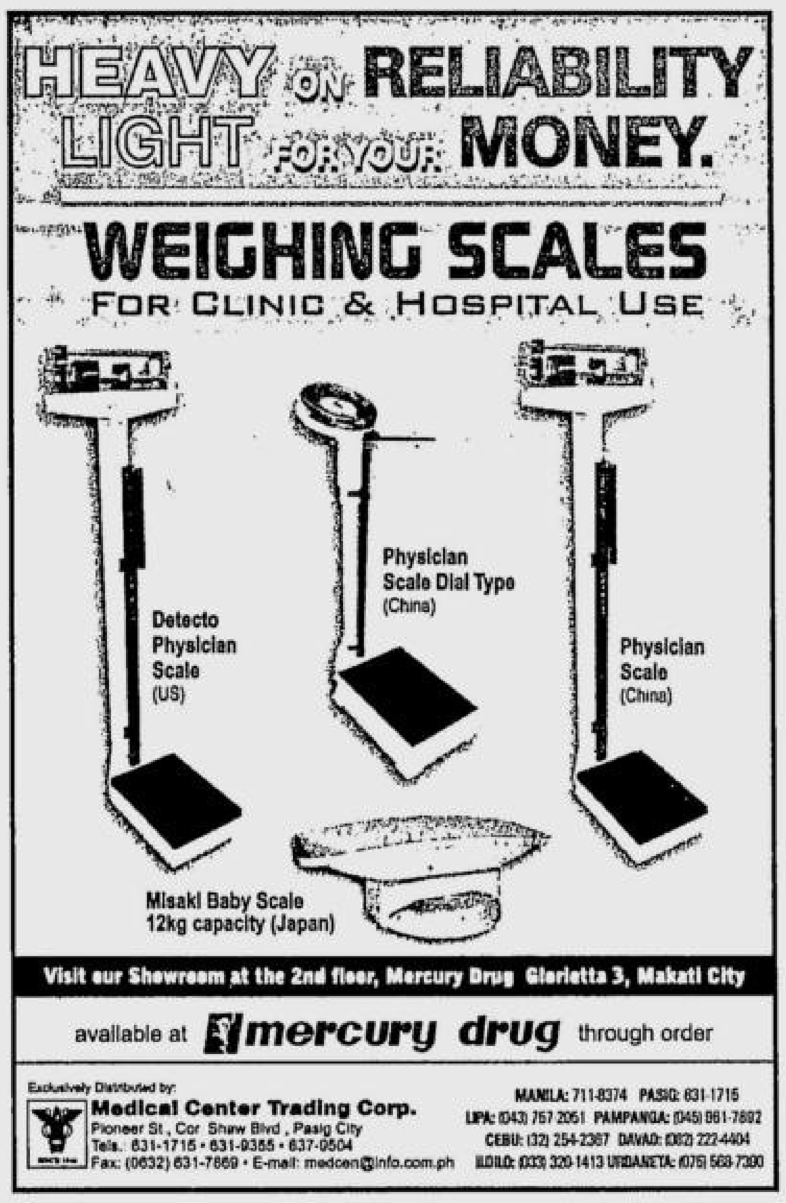
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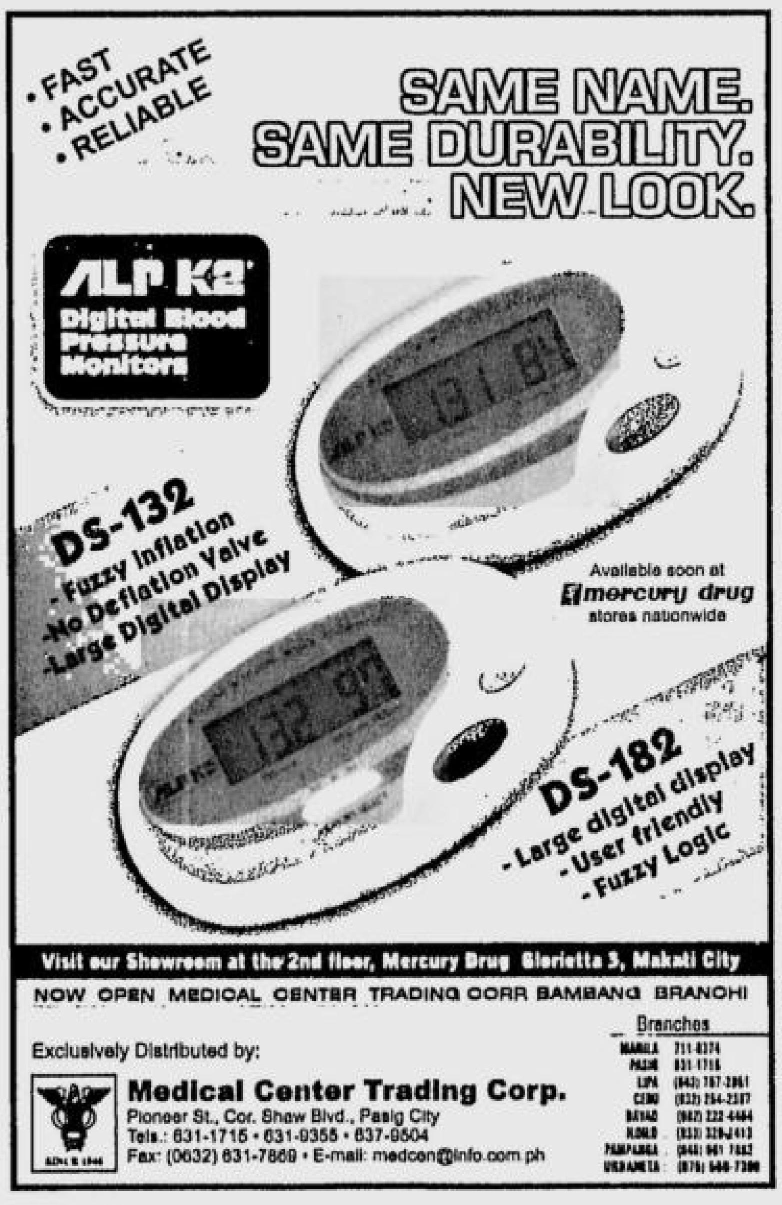

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Teachers, parents oppose 5-year HS

By Dona Pazzibugan

THE "FIVE-YEAR high school" program to be implemented next June has met resistance from teachers and parents.

The Alliance of Concerned Teachers led a protest at the education department yesterday, asking officials to reconsider the program.

The DepEd has imposed an extra school year for incoming public high school freshmen who are found to have not yet mastered their elementary English, Science and Math subjects.

They will have to review these subjects for a year before they can proceed to the regular four-year high school curriculum.

ACT secretary general Fidel Fababier said the DepEd did not consult teachers and parents about the program. He said teachers were not prepared to handle the special curriculum for the one-year pre-high school "bridge program."

DepEd officials who met with the protesters told them to submit a position paper next week.

On May 24, all incoming freshmen will have to take a High School Readiness Test (HSRT) at the public high school where they will enroll.

Depending on the results of the test, a student will either go through the one-year bridge program or on to the four-year high school course.

The DepEd said the one-year intensive review might better prepare students for the regular high school subjects.

Fababier said he doubted the bridge program would be effective as there would still be a lack of classrooms, books and teachers.

TO ALL PRIESTS, RELIGIOUS, AND THE LAY FAITHFUL OF THE DIOCESE OF ILAGAN:

VERITAS LIBERABIT VOS.

Impelled by these words written in my coat of arms, veritas liberabit vos, **"the truth will set you free"**, I once again write you about recent events that cause great anxiety and alarm to our people, namely the closure of **Bombo Radyo** last February 17, 2004 and the forcible entry of its premises and destruction of its property last March 24 perpetrated by the City Government of Cauayan, under the orders of Mayor Cesar Dy.

The City Government claims that it was closed because **Bombo Radyo** has not complied with certain legal and administrative requirements. I have carefully studied the matter and am convinced that **Bombo Radyo** has complied with all reasonable requirements and that the arguments of the City Government to close it are flimsy, capricious and malicious. It is clear to me that the closure of **Bombo Radyo** is an **abusive and tyrannical exercise of power** by the City Government and the Mayor of Cauayan.

Bombo Radyo is known to be critical of all branches of society, including the government, military, police, business, NGO's and even the clergy. Certain sectors of the government obviously do not want the Media or anybody for that matter to question their actions and expose their anomalies. The closure of **Bombo Radyo** is a gross curtailment of Freedom of Speech and Unhampered Access to Information and therefore **contrary to human dignity and to the gospel values of Truth and Freedom.**

I am asking Mayor Dy to allow the reopening of **Bombo Radyo** in the soonest possible time. I am also asking all of you to include this intention in the Prayers of the Faithful in every Mass until **Bombo Radyo** goes on air once again.

With **Bombo Radyo** not in operation, we will not be able to air

1) The Holy Mass celebrated by Fr. Ingeno Rapadas every Sunday morning which our people especially in the remote areas eagerly listen to and which is their only chance to listen to the Word of God.
2) The entertaining and very informative Program of Fr. Florman Cabauatan every Sunday night.
3) The Voters' Education Program and the Candidates' Forum which we are planning, to help our people vote intelligently and give them a chance to know the programs of our candidates, especially in the local level.
4) The results of our Vote Count which we plan to do after the voting in order to counteract whatever fraud may happen in the Official Counting in the Municipal and Provincial levels.

As Christians we are committed to proclaim, defend and fight for the Truth wherever and whenever demonic forces want to shackle it. Let us pray, shout and fight for the **re-opening of Bombo Radyo.** If you keep silent now, do not be surprised if the next tongue that will be chained will be yours. Veritas liberabit vos. The truth will set you free.

Given this 28th day of March 2004 in Ilagan, Isabela

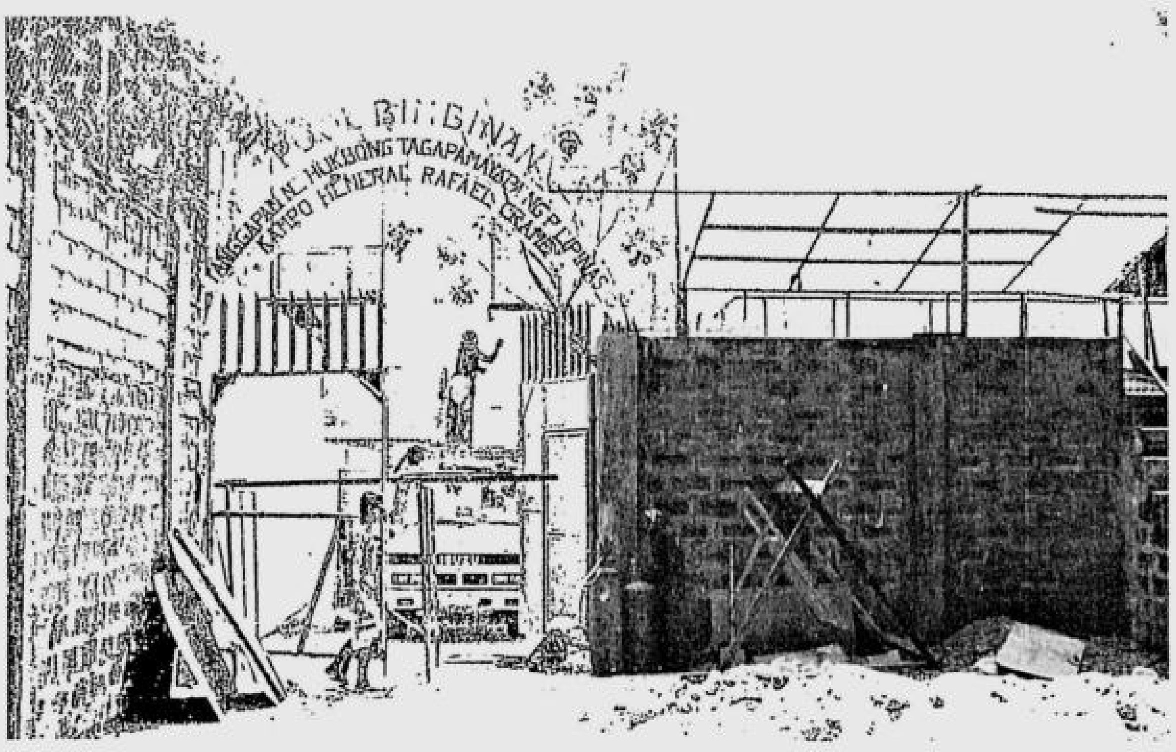
SIGNED

+ Sergio L. Utleg
Bishop of Ilagan

PAID ADVERTISEMENT

Metro bomb targets listed; 2 more Abu suspects fall

From page A1


BUKLOD BIGNAY
TANGGAPAN NG HUKBONG TAGAPAMAYAPA NG PILIPINAS
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NO WAY out, that's what PNP chief Ebdane says of the new but not quite finished "state of the art" jail in Camp Crame where the four suspected Abu Sayyaf terrorists are reportedly detained. JOAN BONDOC

Rafanan refused to say which structures they were.

No truck bombs

The unnamed security official said that with only six members in their cell, Kosovo's group abandoned plans to use truck or car bombs.

"Truck bombs are not that easy to assemble," the source added.

Instead, the operation might have involved "individual bombings," or planting a bomb in one target, he said.

"The objective really was to sow terror and at the same time to raise money," the source added.

Ms Macapagal said security measures had been tightened around the metropolis of 12 million people.

"We will have more police patrols and barangay level alert, inspection of private security procedures and joint drills," the President said.

She also ordered a massive campaign of public information on terrorist networks and their activities "so our people will know how to collectively face these threats."

"National security is everybody's business," she said. "Our cooperation and vigilance will stop these threats."

Ms Macapagal announced the arrests in the middle of a campaign for a tough election battle on May 10.

The military and police said they had also been on a high level of alert for days because of threats of stepped up attacks from the communist New People's Army, which marked its 35th anniversary last Monday.

Lenten alert

The annual surge of air, train and bus travel ahead of Holy Week are also cause for higher vigilance, the army and police said. The red alert situation would remain until at least Easter Sunday.

"Police in Manila are on heightened alert because of multiple threats—the NPA, Abu Sayyaf and the Lenten season, when many people are traveling," Chief Supt. Joel Goltiao told Reuters.

Goltiao said all SWAT teams were out on the streets. Police on motorbikes, with a second officer carrying an M-16 semi-automatic rifle on the back of the bike, have also been sighted around Manila.

"All Army units in Metro Manila have been on red alert since Saturday, and will remain on red alert in the coming days," said Lt. Col. Daniel Lucero, Armed Forces public information chief.

Latest arrests

The two latest suspects, Walter Ancheta Villanueva, alias Abdul Wali, and John Villanueva, alias Yahya, were picked up in Fairview, Quezon City.

Walter Villanueva has a standing arrest warrant for illegal possession of firearms and explosives, Rafanan said. He said the second man was invited for questioning.

Seized from the pair were a "minimal" amount of explosives and some firearms, including a pistol, he said.

Cell dismantled?

Rafanan said samples of the TNT seized during the initial arrests would be turned over to the Coast Guard so they could be compared with forensic findings from the sunken SuperFerry.

"We're still in the process of verifying allegations as against forensic findings," he said.

With the arrest of the six alleged terrorists, Rafanan said authorities were hoping they had fully dismantled the Abu Sayyaf cell plotting to bomb targets in Metro Manila.

"We hope the government has fully accounted for the group so nobody would sow chaos anymore," he told reporters.

An intelligence source told the Inquirer that Villanueva and his companion were the last of the known Abu Sayyaf cell in Metro Manila.

"If there would be any attack, it would most likely come from a separate cell. But that would be remote at this point," Rafanan said.

Direct line to Janjalani

He said that while Abu Sayyaf cells could be many, each consisted of only about six members each.

The cell believed to have been dismantled had a direct line to Janjalani, police said.

The PNP leadership had previously insisted that the Abu Sayyaf's activities had been confined to remote areas in Mindanao.

Besides Limbong, the three others arrested in earlier raids in Makati and Quezon were identified as confessed ferry bomber Redendo Cain Dellosa, Abdusaid Lim and Radsamar Sangkula.

Loquacious bomber

Rafanan theorized that the cell might have long been based in the metropolis but that it was discovered and dismantled only now.

He said Dellosa himself unwittingly helped security forces in making the breakthrough.

During the first week of March, Rafanan said, Dellosa was heard recklessly "blabbing" about that he was involved in the explosion and fire that sank SuperFerry 14 on Feb. 27.

Having received a tip, Rafanan and his men trailed Dellosa, took video footage of him and his companion, and later showed the footage to former Abu Sayyaf hostage Ronald Ulla and another government witness.

Ulla, among 21 people kidnapped by the Abu Sayyaf from Sipadan Island, Malaysia, in 2000, and the witness both confirmed that Dellosa and the others were part of the bandit group involved in the hostage-taking.

A source from the intelligence community told the Inquirer that Villanueva was believed to have been the Abu Sayyaf man who escorted action star Robin Padilla in 2001 to the bandit group's lair in Basilan, where the actor sought the release of hostages then being held there.

The suspect is also a "balik-Islam" or a recent convert to Islam.

AFP information chief Lucero said the arrests "could lead to the discovery of more secrets of the Abu Sayyaf here in Metro Manila."

"The revelations that they will be sharing with us could lead us to more success," he told reporters.

The six suspects have been placed under the custody of the Philippine National Police, which is not exactly famous for its ability to keep high-profile detainees in jail.

No escape this time

But PNP Director General Hermogenes Ebdane Jr. and other top officials believe it would be next to impossible for the six suspects to escape as they had been locked up in a newly constructed "state-of-the-art" facility for high-risk inmates in the heart of Camp Crame.

"It's just impossible," Senior Supt. Eric Reyes, director of the new custodial center, told the Inquirer yesterday.

Rafanan said he was "100-percent sure" nobody could escape from the center.

The facility was built out of the old detention center of the Police Anti-Crime Emergency and Response (Pacer) team following the escape of Indonesian terrorist Fathur Rohman al-Ghozi and two Abu Sayyaf detainees from Camp Crame on July 14 last year.

The facility should ideally house 120 prisoners with four detainees in each cell, according to Reyes.

There are currently 158 inmates there and in the old Pacer detention center located in the same compound, he said.

The capacity will increase to 180-200 inmates once the other half of the new center is completed and the Pacer facility fully refurbished by next month, Reyes said.

At least 137 highly trained policemen guard the custodial center. They are armed with standard 9-mm pistols, M-16 rifles and shotguns.

Reyes said they all went through a comprehensive "high-risk inmate management training" under a member of the US Federal Penitentiary. The training included measures to ensure that jail guards would not be complacent and "too familiar" with inmates, he said.

He said it would also be impossible for outsiders to aid inmates to escape.

"Inspection is very strict," he said. "We have metal detectors, we do strip searches and other procedures."

Reyes said his men recently caught a woman trying to smuggle a cellular phone, stuffed in cooked rice inside a plastic pack, into the custodial center.

Inmates are barred from using mobile phones.

Abu: We have long line of bombers

From page A1

ing—a claim President Macapagal-Arroyo said was being verified.

The Coast Guard has not concluded what caused the disaster.

The most violent of several groups claiming to fight for an Islamic state in Mindanao, the Abu Sayyaf has been linked by the United States to Osama bin Laden's terror network, al-Qaida.

Worldwide notoriety

The Abu Sayyaf has earned worldwide notoriety for its kidnap-for-ransom activities in parts of Mindanao and outlying islands, often targeting foreigners and collecting millions of dollars in ransom. It has beheaded a number of its victims, including an American tourist, Guillermo Sobero.

"*Marami pang kasunod. Ang gobyerno d'yan sa Maynila, huwag sanang maging arogante at hindi kilalanin ang salita namin, pero okey lang. Mas magandang hindi sila naniniwala* (Many more are coming. The government there in Manila should not be arrogant and not take our word, but that's okay. It is better if they don't believe)," said Soliman, referring to future Abu Sayyaf attacks.

"*Sinabi nilang napulbos na nila kami. Sana maging consistent sila. Kung napulbos, napulbos na, pero eto pa rin kami* (They said they have pulverized us. But I hope they will be consistent. If they say we are pulverized, then we are pulverized. But we're still here)."

In a separate statement he read during a phone interview, Soliman indicated that the Abu Sayyaf did not have purely domestic objectives.

"This is our global contribution to fulfill our obligation in defending Islam," he said. "We will not hesitate to use all available means and methods at our disposal to achieve our goal."

Soliman, considered one of the intellectuals of the Al Harakatul-Al Islamiya (Ahai), popularly known as the Abu Sayyaf Group, said in the statement that ASG forces had already reached the country's "capital city."

6 demands

The statement listed six demands, warning that "refusal of such demands would make the government answerable to the appropriate actions."

Soliman did not spell out what these "actions" would be but said the Abu Sayyaf was "ready to undertake (them) within a three-month period."

The demands included:

- Release of Muslim "brothers" detained by the Manila government
- Immediate release of Muslims detained by the United States in its military base in Guantanamo Bay in Cuba.
- "Stop of … all criminal actions" against Muslims anywhere.
- Abstaining from supporting the "criminal Zionist regime" in Palestine.
- Immediate withdrawal of all Christians from Muslim land in the southern Philippines.
- Immediate withdrawal of all foreign troops and nationals from the Arabian peninsula.

Interestingly, there was no demand for US troops training Filipino soldiers in the Philippines to pull out.

'Martyrs, not bombers'

Soliman claimed that the ASG had trained more than enough of "mujahideens" (warriors) prepared to undergo what he called "Shaheed," or martyrdom—that is, offer their lives "in exchange for the eternal bliss of paradise."

They are not "suicide bombers," he said.

"*Kayo lang ang gumagamit niyan. Bawal sa Islam ang magsuicide. Martyrdom ang katapat nun. Wala lang eksaktong translation ang Shaheed, pero 'yun ang pinaniniwalaan naming opening ng gates ng paradise sa aming mga Muslim. Malaking honor yun na mabibilang lamang ang gagawa* (You are the only ones who use the term. Suicide is prohibited in Islam. Martyrdom is its equivalent. There is no exact translation for Shaheed but that is what we believe in, the opening of the gates of Paradise for us Muslims. It is a great honor, only a few can do it)."

Many Arnulfo Alvarados

Soliman ominously added: "*Marami pa kaming Arnulfo Alvarado* (We have many Arnulfo Alvarados)."

Alvarado was the name reported by the Inquirer based on an an earlier Abu Sayyaf statement on the man occupying Bunk 51 on the SuperFerry 14 who supposedly planted the bomb that sparked the fire on board the ship.

The confessed bomber arrested by security forces was identified by police as one Redendo Cain Dellosa.

"*Nasa sa gobyerno talaga ang susi kung paano kami mapipigilan dahil may plus na sila. Sinasabi namin bago naming gawin* (The key to how we can be stopped lies with the government because they already have a plus. We give prior notice before we do it)," Soliman claimed.

There has been no indication from security officials or from ferry owners that they received any advance warning that harm would befall SuperFerry 14 on its voyage from Manila to the Visayas. *(To be continued)*

MWSS exec offers to tell all about Maynilad deal

From page A1

He warned the MWSS board that it would be treading on "dangerous ground" if it approved the plan.

Former Neda Director General Felipe Medalla, for his part, had released a study showing that the government would end up the loser in the deal because the MWSS would have a P3.8-billion exposure in the utility if it acceded to the plan.

Unjust 3-B enrichment

On March 29, Mauricio elevated the charges he filed against the President on March 22 from graft and corruption to economic plunder.

In the plunder complaint, he asked Ombudsman Simeon Marcelo to indict Ms Macapagal and several others for allegedly unjustly enriching themselves in the amount of at least P11.5 billion in connection with the "bailout" of Maynilad.

The candidate told reporters in Bacolod that the "unjustified failure" of Ms Macapagal "to serve the notice of termination to Maynilad Water Services Inc. enabled the above-named respondents to unjustly enriched themselves in the amount of P3.5 billion."

The P3.5 billion represents the amount that should have been paid to the MWSS if the termination notice were served to Maynilad in 2001.

But all told, Ms Macapagal and the others plundered the nation's coffers in the amount of P11.5 billion, according to Mauricio.

"If you add the amount to the P8 billion in unpaid concession fees to MWSS, you have P11.5 billion which went down the drain. Instead of paying for it, the government and Benpres agreed to defer payment. That was why they gave unwarranted benefit to Maynilad and undue injury against the Filipino people," he said.

SC dismisses petition

Details of the government plan to take over Maynilad are contained in Amendment 2 to the 25-year concession agreement of Maynilad.

Mauricio had petitioned the Supreme Court to order a Quezon City court to make public details of the government deal with Maynilad.

The Supreme Court dismissed the petition on March 30.

In an en banc resolution, it said the petition was premature because Judge Reynaldo Daway, of the QC Regional Trial Court Branch 90, appeared to have not issued any order prohibiting the public disclosure of the terms of the agreement.

Daway is reviewing the compromise settlement the government reached with Maynilad to save the utility from collapse.

After the first public consultation on the deal, Teehankee told reporters that alterations to the compromise agreement could still be incorporated and re-filed in court.

He said "there is a clean exit for Benpres " in the compromise agreement. "Benpres was given permission to exit and freed up of its guarantees on the performance bond and other bridge loans because they have no money," he said

Teehankee noted that Benpres had been defaulting on its loans over the past two years. Under the deal, "the MWSS will receive priority payments for annual concession fee obligations estimated at P2 billion a year as the projected cash flows will be sufficient to service loan interest and principal amortization," he said.

The New Maynilad can look forward to future profitability and an increase in equity value of P225 million (in projected dividends) from 2004 to 2007 and P2.5 billion from 2008 to 2011.

Respondents

Besides Ms Macapagal, those named respondents in a supplemental complaint-affidavit for plunder were acting Justice Secretary Merceditas Gutierrez, Undersecretary Manuel A.J. Teehankee, who is also the acting government corporate counsel, and other officials of the Macapagal administration, particularly those comprising the board of trustees of MWSS.

Also impleaded in the complaint were the Lopezes—Oscar, Manuel and Eugenio III—and the other Bepres officials—Steve Psinakis, Felipe B. Alfonso, Washington Sycip, Vicente Paterno, Angel Ong, Eugene Quiason and Maria Amina Amado.

Mauricio said the alleged act violated the provisions of Section 2 in relation to Section 1(d)[6] of Republic Act No. 7080, or the Plunder Law.

Series of criminal acts

A heinous crime is committed by a government official or his conspirators when they illegally accumulate at least P50 million through a combination or series of overt or criminal acts.

Mauricio said he was filing the supplemental complaint-affidavit for plunder, defined and penalized under Republic Act No. 7080, because he believed that Ms Macapagal and the others allegedly conspired, confederated and confabulated with one another, to unjustly enrich themselves "to the damage and prejudice of the Filipino people and the Republic of the Philippines."

He said the "unjust enrichment" arose from the alleged deliberate refusal of the government to collect some P8 billion in concession fees from Maynilad as stipulated under the 25-year concession agreement, which took effect in 1997.

"The above-named respondents were further unjustly enriched when—despite the violations committed by Maynilad Water Services Inc. in its concession agreement with the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System—Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, as president of the Republic of the Philippines … deliberately withheld terminating the concession agreement."

Mauricio said the "unjustified failure" of the President, through the justice department and the MWSS, to serve the notice of termination to Maynilad violated the provisions of Section 2 of Republic Act No. 7080.

According to Mauricio, Section 2 of RA No. 7080 provides that "any public officer who, by himself or in connivance with members of his family, relatives by affinity or consanguinity, business associates, subordinates or other persons, amasses, accumulates or acquires ill-gotten wealth through a combination or series of overt or criminal acts as described in Section 1(d) hereof in the aggregate amount or total value of at least Fifty million pesos shall be guilty of the crime of plunder and shall be punished by reclusion perpetua to death."

Section 1 defines ill-gotten wealth as "any asset, property, business enterprise or material possession of any person within the purview of Section 2 hereof, acquired by him directly or indirectly through dummies, nominees, agents, subordinates and or business associates."

With a report from Philip C. Tubeza

Roco has a job for Luli

By TJ Burgonio

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo's daughter, Evangelina Lourdes "Luli" Arroyo, can claim her appointment as a career diplomat in a Raul Roco administration.

The young Arroyo passed the foreign service examinations in 2000 but decided not to pursue a diplomatic career because her mother would not sign her appointment papers for fear of being accused of nepotism.

Yesterday Luli got an unusual offer from her mother's rival Roco—a diplomatic job in his administration.

"There's no question in my mind. She topped the foreign service [examinations]. She's bright," said Roco.

"She wants the job. She likes it. She's interested. Luli should be appointed by the next President. And if blessed, I will appoint her. I will call Luli and tell her, 'Now you can get what you want,'" he said.

Given her excellent academic background, Luli should be posted in the plum diplomatic postings of China or Europe, Roco further suggested.

"She's a topnotcher, she deserves a top assignment," he said.

But he said the 32-year-old Luli should first be appointed a career service officer, not an ambassador right away, and be allowed to work her way up "on her own."

"If she's made ambassador, it will be political. That's not fair to her because she has talent. It's better to put her in the career service. If you do this, she becomes ambassador in her own right," Roco told reporters in Navotas.

Luli, who holds a master's degree in international relations at the United States-based Georgetown University and works as operations director for the Foundation for Information Technology, Education and Development, was one of only three people who passed the tough written and oral examinations for foreign service officers in 2000. That year 3,000 took the prequalifying exams and only 327 qualified to take the written and oral tests.

In March 2001 when those who qualified would have taken up their postings, the President said she could not sign Luli's appointment papers.

"I was so sad, one of the saddest, when she [Luli] said 'I would no longer [pursue this career' because Gloria was against it. I would have been proud to appoint her," said Roco, who admits to doting on Luli because she was a close friend of the family.

Luli and her brothers Juan Miguel "Mikey" and Diosdado Ignacio "Dato" have been friends of the Rocos' children since they became neighbors at La Vista subdivision in Quezon City in the 1980s.

"We've been neighbors since 1981. Rex [his son] is a pal of Dato. When Doña Eva [the President's mother] was still alive, she would come out of their home on Sunday afternoons asking for Rex," he recalled.

"The Arroyo children would drop by our house. They call me Tito [uncle]. We've been close neighbors... Every time they see me, they kiss me. It just happens that politically we're not [close]," Roco explained.

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Open Letter to candidates for President

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Roco has a job for Luli

By TJ Burgonio

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo's daughter, Evangelina Lourdes "Luli" Arroyo, can claim her appointment as a career diplomat in a Raul Roco administration.

The young Arroyo passed the foreign service examinations in 2000 but decided not to pursue a diplomatic career because her mother would not sign her appointment papers for fear of being accused of nepotism.

Yesterday Luli got an unusual offer from her mother's rival Roco—a diplomatic job in his administration.

"There's no question in my mind. She topped the foreign service [examinations]. She's bright," said Roco.

"She wants the job. She likes it. She's interested. Luli should be appointed by the next President. And if blessed, I will appoint her. I will call Luli and tell her, 'Now you can get what you want,'" he said.

Given her excellent academic background, Luli should be posted in the plum diplomatic postings of China or Europe, Roco further suggested.

"She's a topnotcher, she deserves a top assignment," he said.

But he said the 32-year-old Luli should first be appointed a career service officer, not an ambassador right away, and be allowed to work her way up "on her own."

"If she's made ambassador, it will be political. That's not fair to her because she has talent. It's better to put her in the career service. If you do this, she becomes ambassador in her own right," Roco told reporters in Navotas.

Luli, who holds a master's degree in international relations at the United States-based Georgetown University and works as operations director for the Foundation for Information Technology, Education and Development, was one of only three people who passed the tough written and oral examinations for foreign service officers in 2000. That year 3,000 took the prequalifying exams and only 327 qualified to take the written and oral tests.

In March 2001 when those who qualified would have taken up their postings, the President said she could not sign Luli's appointment papers.

"I was so sad, one of the saddest, when she [Luli] said 'I would no longer [pursue this career' because Gloria was against it. I would have been proud to appoint her," said Roco, who admits to doting on Luli because she was a close friend of the family.

Luli and her brothers Juan Miguel "Mikey" and Diosdado Ignacio "Dato" have been friends of the Rocos' children since they became neighbors at La Vista subdivision in Quezon City in the 1980s.

"We've been neighbors since 1981. Rex [his son] is a pal of Dato. When Doña Eva [the President's mother] was still alive, she would come out of their home on Sunday afternoons asking for Rex," he recalled.

"The Arroyo children would drop by our house. They call me Tito [uncle]. We've been close neighbors... Every time they see me, they kiss me. It just happens that politically we're not [close]," Roco explained.

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The WORLD

Editor Luverne B. Gueco

Bomb kills five US soldiers in Iraq

BAGHDAD—A bomb exploded under a US military vehicle west of Baghdad on Wednesday, killing five soldiers, the military said. At least four people, including one American and possibly other foreign nationals, were killed in a separate attack and their bodies were burned and mutilated.

The explosive device that killed the Americans blew up when their vehicle ran over it, US Army Col. Jill Morgenthaler said in Baghdad. The attack occurred in Anbar province, which encompasses Fallujah, Ramadi and other towns where anti-US insurgents are active.

Residents said the bomb attack occurred in Malahma, 20 km northwest of Fallujah.

In an unrelated attack Wednesday, gunmen in Fallujah attacked two civilian cars that residents said were carrying foreign nationals. The occupants of the cars were killed and their vehicles were set on fire. Witnesses saw at least four bodies.

Footage from Associated Press Television News showed a charred body of one of the slain men, and the targeted vehicles in flames nearby. Some of the slain men were wearing flak jackets, said Safa Mohammedi, a resident.

APTN footage showed one American passport near a body.

Another resident, Abdul Aziz Mohammed, said angry crowds dragged the bodies through the streets, dismembered them and hanged some of the mutilated corpses. One man beat a corpse with a metal pole. Residents tied a cord to another body, tied it to a car and drove it down a street.

"The people of Fallujah hanged some of the bodies on the old bridge like slaughtered sheep," Mohammed said. "I saw it myself."

The identities of the slain men were unclear. One resident displayed what appeared to be dog tags taken from one body. Residents also said there were weapons in the targeted cars.

Northeast of Baghdad, a suicide bomber blew up explosives in his car when he was near a convoy of government vehicles on Wednesday, killing himself and wounding six others, police said. It was the second suicide attack in two days in Iraq.

The blast occurred in the city of Baqouba, about 50 km northeast of Baghdad, said police Col. Ali Hossein. The attacked convoy was normally used to transport the Diala provincial governor, Abdullah al-Joubori, but he was elsewhere at the time.

Three of the wounded were al-Joubori's bodyguards, while the three others were bystanders, Hossein said.

On Tuesday, a suicide bombing outside the house of a police chief in Hillah, about 100 km south of Baghdad, killed the attacker and wounded seven others.

In the latest assault on US-led coalition forces, one US soldier was killed and another wounded in a roadside bombing Tuesday, said Brig. Gen. Mark Kimmitt. The injured soldier was flown to a combat support hospital after the explosion near Ramadi, west of Baghdad.

In Ramadi, a US Humvee was hit with a rocket-propelled grenade on Tuesday, setting it on fire, witnesses said. Four soldiers who were in the vehicle were seen being rushed away in another Humvee. A US spokesperson in Baghdad could not confirm the attack. It was unclear whether the incidents were related.

Attacks against US-led coalition forces have increased in the last week, Kimmitt said. He said there had been an average of 26 attacks daily, an increase of about six from recent weeks.

Despite the "slight uptick," Kimmitt said, the security situation in Iraq remained "stable."

In the southern city of Najaf, Iraqis demanding jobs threw stones at Spanish soldiers and Iraqi police on Tuesday. Witnesses reported gunfire, and at least three police and two protesters were injured. Fifteen people were detained in the three-hour protest. *AP*

Spain focuses on Moroccan extremists in blast probe

MADRID—The Spanish government named a Moroccan extremist group linked to al-Qaida as the main focus of the Madrid bombing probe and said Tuesday that investigators were making swift progress.

The Moroccan Islamic Combatant Group, forerunner of a group blamed for last year's suicide bombings in Casablanca, is now the "priority," Interior Minister Angel Acebes said—a reversal of the government's initial statements that the prime suspects were Basque separatists.

"Other options are not being ruled out, but primarily the investigation is going to go in this direction," Acebes told reporters.

The group had surfaced in Spanish news reports, but this was the first time a Spanish government official publicly identified it as the focus of investigation into the March 11 commuter train bombings, which killed 191 people and wounded more than 1,800.

Acebes said witness testimony and the discovery of a rural house where the attackers were believed to have assembled the backpack bombs used in the attacks have led investigators closer to unraveling the plot behind the bombings.

"The investigation is advancing. In 18 days we have arrested 23 people including some of the chief perpetrators of the attack," Acebes said. Moroccan, British and German authorities were involved in the investigation, he added.

Court officials said Judge Juan del Olmo would issue an international arrest warrant for five other suspects Tuesday.

The Spanish news agency Efe said Abdelkrim Mejjati, a 36-year-old Moroccan reportedly believed to have masterminded the attack, was among the five being sought. Court officials would not confirm the report. *AP*

US to jail illegal immigrants in Denver, Atlanta

ALL ILLEGAL immigrants deemed deportable will be jailed immediately under a new federal program to be tested in Denver and Atlanta, federal officials announced Tuesday.

The Department of Homeland Security pilot program is an effort to reduce the number of illegal immigrants at large who have failed to leave the country as ordered.

Immigration law experts said the program violates constitutional rights and called for less costly alternatives.

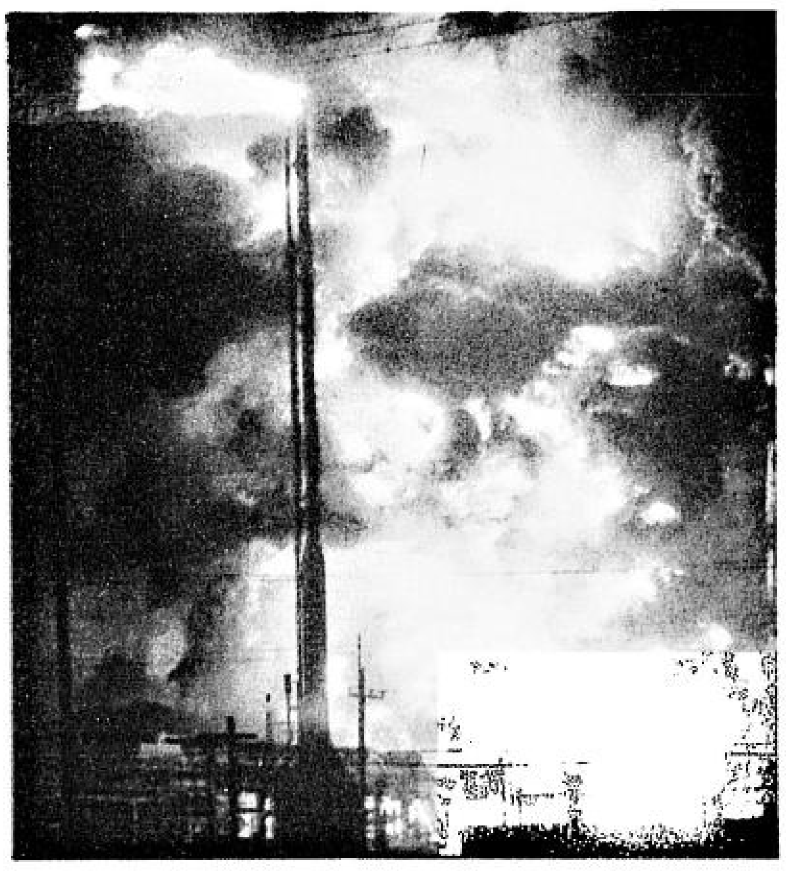
"Jailing and the restraint of physical movement is the greatest power that government can wield over the individual in our society. Unfortunately, with this policy, the Department of Homeland Security has eschewed case-by-case consideration in favor of a blanket detention policy that violates basic due process principles," said Marshall Fitz, associate director of the American Immigration Lawyers Association, an advocacy group.

In the past, immigrants ordered deported often were released so that they could take care of personal affairs before reporting to leave the country.

But federal authorities increasingly have pressed for detention because of security concerns and evidence that as many as 85 percent of these illegal immigrants abscond. US Immigration and Customs Enforcement officials estimate there are more than 400,000 illegal immigrant fugitives—including 2,500 in the Denver area.

The program to begin soon in Denver and Atlanta is an effort to reduce the burden of rounding up illegal immigrants later by arresting and jailing them immediately following federal immigration proceedings.

"If there are better ideas from the community or non-governmental organizations we are always looking for input. But we have to do something about these individuals who are not fulfilling the laws of the country," said Doug Maurer, Homeland Security's detention and removal field office director in Denver. *New York Times News Service*



A FURNACE at the BP Refinery in Texas City, explodes a second time, Tuesday evening. No injuries or deaths were reported in the blaze that lit up the Gulf Coast sky. AP

Fire strikes 3rd largest US oil refinery

HOUSTON—An explosion and fire rocked a BP oil refinery in Texas, the third largest in the United States, on Tuesday, driving gasoline prices to an all-time high and unnerving currency markets worried about security threats.

BP Plc said there was no sign of "any outside influence" in the blast and fire, which came days after the US Federal Bureau of Investigation warned Texas oil refiners of possible terror attacks ahead of elections in November.

The cause of the fire, which began with an explosion in the gasoline-producing unit at the 447,000 barrel-per-day (bpd) refinery in Texas City, Texas, was not known, but it did not appear to have been started intentionally, BP said.

"We have no indication of any outside influence on the incident," said company spokesperson Annie Smith.

BP has been maintaining high security at its Texas refinery after the FBI warning on March 25 of an unsubstantiated threat of an attack.

No injuries were reported due to the explosion and fire, which began around 6:30 p.m., and all plant personnel were accounted for, Smith added.

Television reports showed flames jumping over 50 feet in the area, lighting up the night sky across Texas City, located 48 km south of Houston.

Flames could be seen up to two miles away at the start of the blaze. A state highway and streets leading to the refinery were blocked off by police to prevent exposure to the hydrocarbon smoke and residents were instructed to stay indoors.

The rest of BP's Texas City refinery and chemical complex continues to operate normally, the spokesperson said, adding that she did not know what level of output the refinery was producing.

The fire was under control but still burning at 10 p.m. Firefighters were going to let the fire burn itself out overnight, Smith said.

She declined to specifically identify the affected unit, citing BP policy against doing so.

BP and other Texas refiners said last week they had heightened their security since the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks on New York and Washington, D.C. and were constantly on watch for possible threats.

Some traders said security fears prompted by the explosion might have triggered the latest dollar fall and helped boost the Swiss franc, traditionally seen as a safe haven.

US unleaded gasoline futures hit an all-time high on Wednesday after the fire, which also revived worries of a motor fuel supply crunch in the peak demand summer months.

Front-month April gasoline on the New York Mercantile Exchange charged to a record at $1.1768 a gallon, surpassing a May 2001 record at $1.1750, before easing to $1.1700 a gallon.

Security experts have said refineries located near highways and waterways, like many plants in Texas, Louisiana and California, are more vulnerable to possible attack.

Smith said on Tuesday that BP was keeping all law enforcement agencies informed about the fire and BP's investigation into its cause.

Operations at other refineries in Texas City were unaffected by the BP fire. *Reuters*

ANTITERROR

Indonesian special attack corps run on the beach, demonstrating their skills on how to control terror in any unrest situation, in north Jakarta as 24 political parties struggle with each other to win for the first direct general and presidential election. AFP

Death toll in Uzbekistan climbs to 42

TASHKENT—The death toll in this week's wave of violence blamed on Islamic militants in Uzbekistan stood Wednesday at 42, with all of the attacks appearing to target the government—an ally in the US-led war on terror.

The violence, including the country's first suicide bombings, has been Uzbekistan's most serious unrest since it let hundreds of US troops use a base near the Afghan border after the Sept. 11 attacks.

Uzbek forces battled for hours Tuesday with suspected terrorists, and were struck by two suicide attacks, in clashes centered in a neighborhood just outside the city off the road heading to the official home of President Islam Karimov.

The interior ministry said the fighting killed three policemen and wounded five. It said 20 terror suspects died and that all of them blew themselves up, but that contradicted accounts that government forces killed some of the militants in shootouts.

An Associated Press reporter saw four separate sites of fighting in the district: remnants from two suicide bombings on roads, a burned-out building pockmarked with bullet holes and the bodies of at least five suspects splayed out in front of an apartment house.

The clashes began with a pair of suicide bombings.

Police stopped a small car, and two alleged terrorists jumped out and detonated explosive-laden belts, killing themselves and three police and wounding five more officers, said a National Security Service officer at the scene who declined to give his name.

Down the road, a woman detonated explosives after refusing to heed police orders to stop approaching a bus, according to witnesses who said she set off the blast after officers shot her in the legs.

The suicide bomber was decapitated in the blast, said Hairniso Supiyeva, 64, whose front gate was pitted with shrapnel from the explosion. Three black-clad women who had been in a car with the bomber fled to a nearby apartment building, where police then began a nearly five-hour standoff with them and other suspects. *AP*

Bolivian miner blows himself up in Congress

LA PAZ—An unemployed miner with dynamite strapped to his chest blew himself up in Bolivia's Congress, killing two police officers and wounding 10 others in what the president said was an act of "a desperate man."

President Carlos Mesa urged Bolivians to be calm, saying the 47-year-old bomber acted alone and without political motivations other than his demand for early retirement benefits.

The bomber, identified as Eustaquio Pichacuri, entered Congress around midday and went to a section of the building used by visitors, away from the congressional chambers, police chief Guido Arandia said.

He detonated at least eight sticks of dynamite as congressional security police tried to negotiate, authorities said.

"I was standing some four meters away from him. He had dynamite sticks strapped all around his body—a lot of them," said Raul Moreno, a police officer on the scene.

Interior Minister Alfonso Ferrufino said the miner also carried a backpack with more dynamite, which was later detonated safely by police.

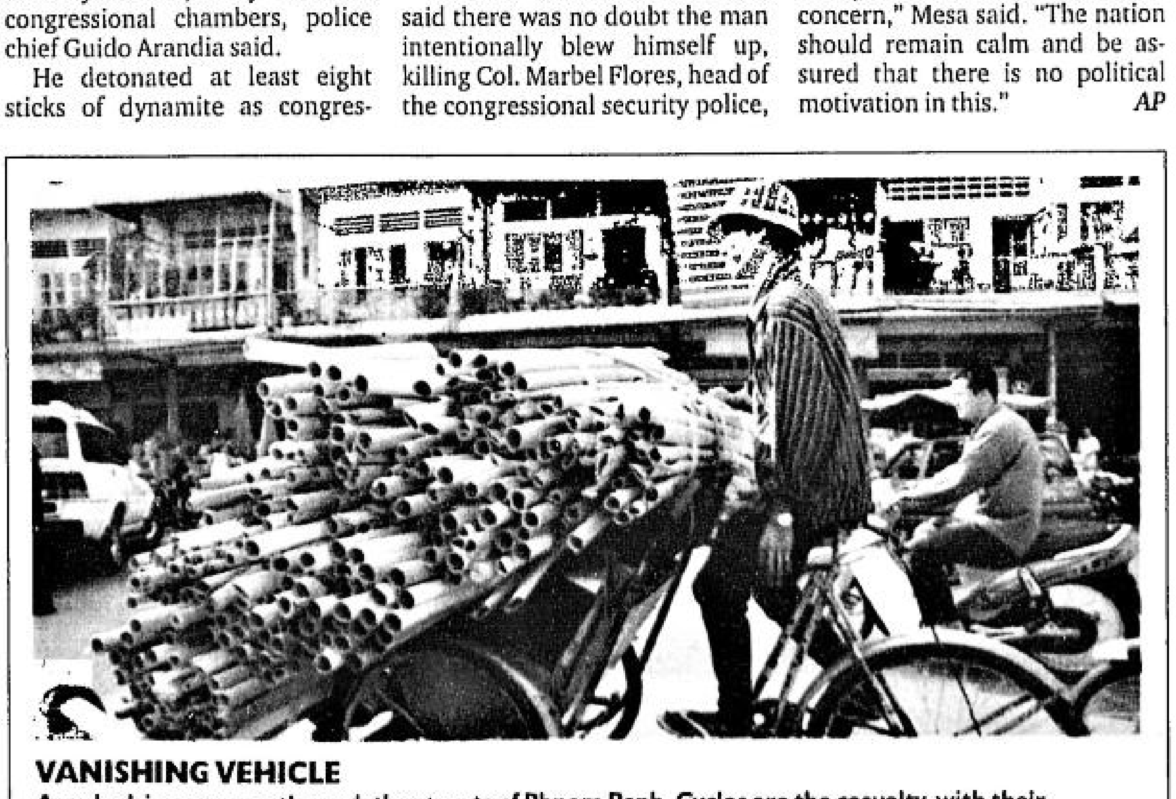
The man's demand for early retirement benefits underscored the grievances of thousands of poor Bolivian miners who have lost their jobs in recent years.

Arandia and other witnesses said there was no doubt the man intentionally blew himself up, killing Col. Marbel Flores, head of the congressional security police, and an officer who wasn't identified. Col. Carlos Za, head of the country's intelligence service, was critically injured.

Authorities had evacuated the building in a downtown plaza across the street from the presidential palace after word spread that the miner had entered and that disgruntled miners reportedly planned to force their way into the building.

Mesa, speaking on television and radio, called the miner "a desperate man."

"I want to tell the nation that what happened today is an absolutely isolated event, not related to any situation that should cause concern," Mesa said. "The nation should remain calm and be assured that there is no political motivation in this." *AP*



VANISHING VEHICLE

A cyclo driver powers through the streets of Phnom Penh. Cyclos are the casualty, with their numbers estimated to drop from around 10,000 a decade ago to just 2,100 today as customers instead jump on ubiquitous "motodops" to zip around town. AFP

White House allows Rice to testify on 9/11

WASHINGTON—US President George W. Bush reversed course under heavy pressure on Tuesday and agreed to let his national security adviser, Condoleezza Rice, give sworn public testimony before the Sept. 11 commission.

Bush and Vice President Dick Cheney also agreed to meet together privately with the full panel, abandoning their earlier insistence that they would meet only with the commission's chair and vice chair.

Rice was likely to testify toward the end of next week, with Bush and Cheney following sometime after that, a senior administration official said.

The dramatic about-face came in a White House letter to the panel that said Rice would appear in public if it was agreed it would not set a precedent under the constitutional separation of executive and legislative powers.

"We have observed this principle while also seeking ways for Dr. Rice to testify so that the public record is full and accurate," Bush told reporters in a statement after months of White House resistance to calls for public testimony by Rice.

"I've ordered this level of cooperation because I consider it necessary to gaining a complete picture of the months and years that preceded the murder of our fellow citizens."

The president made no reference to his impending appearance before the commission with Cheney. He did not take questions.

The 10-member commission insisted on public testimony from Rice after former counterterrorism czar Richard Clarke's bombshell allegations last week that the Bush White House ignored an urgent al-Qaida threat before the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks and focused on Iraq as a likely culprit afterward.

Until the announcement, administration officials discussed a possible compromise in which Rice would meet privately with the panel and then release her unsworn remarks.

"The president recognizes the truly unique and extraordinary circumstances underlying the commission's responsibility to prepare a detailed report on the facts and circumstances of the horrific attacks on Sept. 11, 2001," the president's legal counsel, Alberto Gonzales, wrote to the commission chair, Republican Thomas Kean, and vice chair, Democrat Lee Hamilton. *Reuters*

OLSEN REUTERS

NY entrepreneur is 3rd space tourist

NEW YORK—Growing up in a working class family in New York, Gregory Olsen never imagined he would travel to space.

Half a lifetime later, the self-described "Brooklyn boy made good" technology entrepreneur will pay $20 million to travel to the International Space Station on an eight-day trip organized by US space tourism company Space Adventures.

The decision to choose Olsen as the third person to travel privately on a space flight was announced by the company on Monday in New York.

American businessman Dennis Tito went up in space in 2001, and South African Mark Shuttleworth went up in 2002.

Olsen, a fit-looking 58, will spend the next six months training at the Yuri Gagarin Cosmonaut Training Center in Star City, Russia, with his launch date aboard the Soyuz TMA spacecraft scheduled for April 2005.

Calling himself "anxious and raring to go," Olsen said in an interview with Reuters he plans to use the trip to conduct educational and scientific experiments and inspire others who might also come from humble beginnings.

"Hopefully I will be motivating young people rather than coming across as some rich businessman," he said. "I am just an average guy that... worked hard and made it eventually.

Olsen earned degrees in electrical engineering and physics, putting himself through college by working summers in his father's electrical union, before winning his master's and doctoral degrees.

He has 10 patents and is an authority on crystal growth, lasers and photo-detectors.

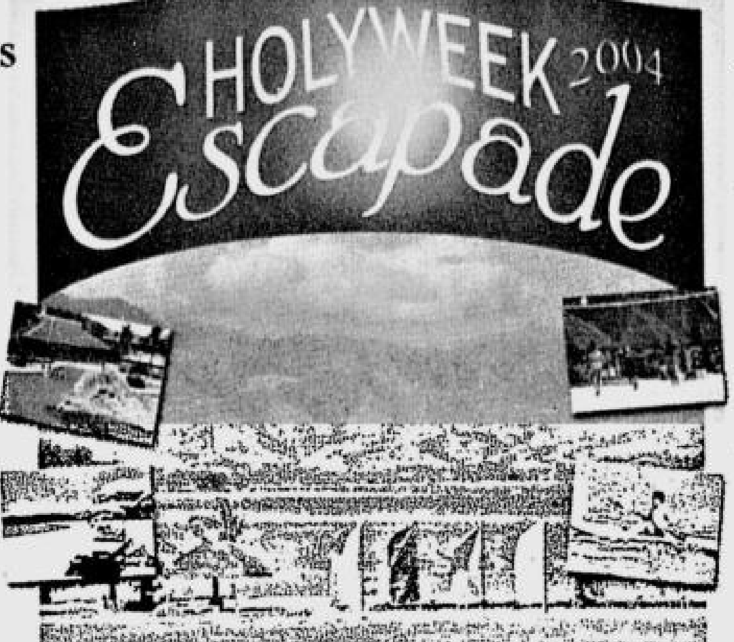
He sold his company, Sensors Unlimited, for $700 million and conducted a management buy-back of the firm two years ago.

His two main projects in space involve crystal growth and using the infrared cameras his company develops for astronomical purposes, partly funded by Nasa.

"If these experiments work, we will be able to detect infrared light better with higher sensitivity and better resolution than we can do now," he said.

Olsen has the first of four seats now available to Space Adventures aboard the Soyuz spacecraft through 2007. Three other people will be chosen, most likely in coming months, to fill the other seats, the company said.

The project is being run in conjunction with the Russian Federal Space Agency and Rocket Space Corp. Energia. *Reuters*



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***7. Drawing of winners is on May 15, 2004** at Isuzu Commonwealth 5:00PM in the presence of Isuzu Philippines Corporation officials and a representative from the DTI. Drawing of winners will be telecast on Auto Extreme at 3:30PM in Channel 9, two weeks after the draw date.

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10. Winners will be notified via telephone and registered mail. Winners will be announced in leading newspapers.

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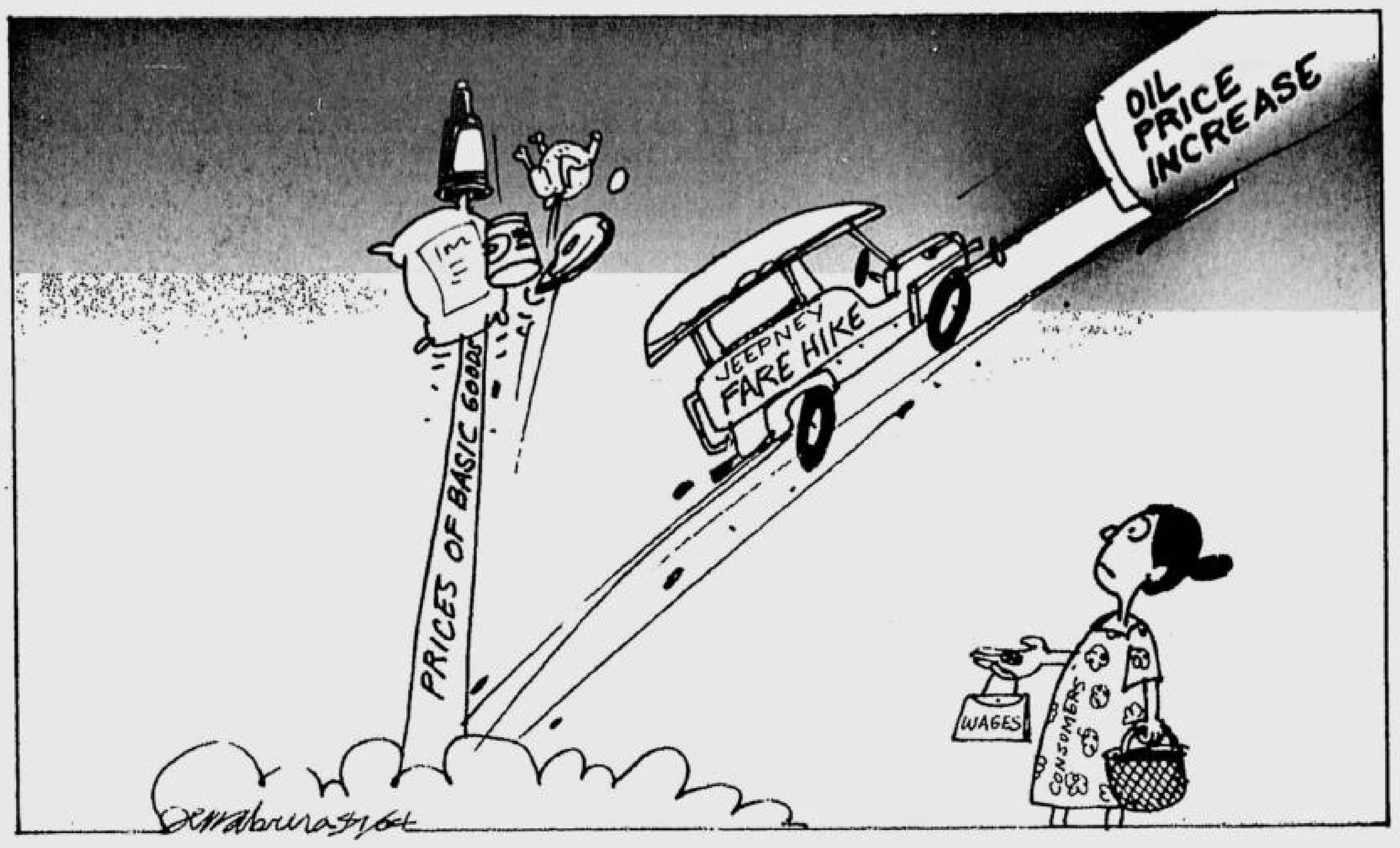

Ho, ho, ho

EDITORIAL

EVEN Ricardo Saludo, deputy spokesperson for President Macapagal-Arroyo, conceded last week that it was "potentially embarrassing" for the administration to have anything to do with gambling mogul Stanley Ho, "especially at this time." By "this time," it may be safely presumed that Saludo meant this campaign season, when the President continues to claim the moral high ground and her critics are throwing everything at her, including the proverbial kitchen sink. Indeed, why provide the enemy grist for the mill at this time when the President's handlers are scrambling to keep the "Caesar's wife" image from crumbling?

But the photograph of Dan Roleda welcoming Ho at the Diosdado Macapagal International Airport on March 22 captured what Cartier-Bresson might deem the decisive moment. Roleda, earlier identified as presidential adviser on foreign investments, was caught on camera widely smiling, arms outstretched with hands palms up—a posture that can only indicate delight at the arrival of one of the world's richest men, who was just then disembarking from the plane that brought him from his base in Hong Kong.

Now, what is the attentive observer to conclude from this photograph but that, embarrassment or not, the administration has something to do with the casino magnate who brought his gaming business to this country as early as the Marcos dictatorship? The same man who, having lost his 42-year monopoly on gambling operations in Macau in 2002, is reportedly casting about for hospitable terrain?

But apparently, the men speaking for Ms Macapagal were clueless. (That, or they're damned good performers.) Asked to explain Roleda's presence, her main man Ignacio Bunye categorically said he did not know such an adviser and had never heard the name until then. Both Bunye and Saludo, who serves as the Cabinet secretary, said they saw neither hide nor hair of Roleda during Cabinet meetings; Bunye even momentarily shed his always proper demeanor to say Roleda could be one of the "sexual advisers"—that is to say, the people to turn to for "f...ing advice." Good Lord.

Bunye, however, may be allowed his brief dalliance with street language. Imagine being sought for comment on something as potentially explosive as the issue of possible transactions between this administration and the man who, at one point in the abbreviated term of President Joseph Estrada, chaired the BW Resources Corp. Yes, the gaming company for whose shares heavy speculation and margin trading came horribly close to causing the total collapse of the securities market in October 1999. The fallout from that lamentable caper was that Ho never got to inaugurate his floating restaurant, then and now docked at the Manila Bay. The heat generated by the protests mounted by cause-oriented and religious groups bent on blocking planned casino operations in the restaurant appeared to be too much for the tycoon who, while admitting to being inured to "occasional controversy," found the allegations against him "so vilifying and bitter and cynical as to be completely unacceptable."

This background notwithstanding, the Angeles University Foundation at the Clark Special Economic Zone in Pampanga saw fit to confer on Ho an honorary doctorate in humanities, which occasioned his seven-hour visit—and Roleda's effusive welcome—on March 22, Monday. Lingayen-Dagupan Archbishop Oscar Cruz and others who demand of our institutions a more stringent vetting of persons to be honored cannot be faulted for reacting with vehemence.

It does not help that, rightly or wrongly, a convergence of circumstances—the President's R&R at Clark on Tuesday; her brother Diosdado Macapagal Jr.'s membership in the Angeles University's board of trustees; indeed, as Saludo astutely noted, "this time" (of campaigning and of high spending)—provides a tawdry glitter to Ho's visit. The glitter persists despite Malacañang's protestations of innocence, and Saludo's subsequent announcement that Roleda is actually a presidential assistant, not adviser, on foreign investments.

The prevailing suspicion is this: that Stanley Ho has contributed to Malacañang's campaign chest in exchange for approval of a gambling project in the Philippines. (Archbishop Cruz has gone so far as to say that Ho's money appears to be already funding gambling operations on these shores.) The President may be on her high horse, but her men are fumbling the chore of debunking that suspicion. And the opposition is having a field day. Ho, ho, ho.

'Ten-watt' suits

VIEWPOINT

Juan L. Mercado

"SO, Ferdinand Marcos and Joseph Estrada got the Nobel prize equivalent for corruption?" a New York friend wrote. "Who needs such 'lauréates'?"

Nakakahiya reactions from Jeddah to Sydney erupted, after Associated Press reported: Transparency International's "Ten Most Corrupt World Leaders" list included the two.

With bated breath, we've waited for defamation raps from Makati—ghetto of ten-watt suits. Earlier, Makati Assistant City Prosecutor Carlos Flores and colleagues Imelda Saulog and Feliciano Aspi, slapped libel raps against those who dubbed Marcos "dictator and thief."

On this less-than-luminous decision's receiving end were: PCGG's Ruben Carranza, Today editors Lourdes Molina-Fernandez, Dionisio Pelayo and reporter Estrella Torres.

Backed by the incorruptible Haydee Yorac, Carranza wrested $683 million from the Marcoses. With Supreme Court imprimatur, the PCGG returned that stash to government. "Words have petticoats," Mexicans say. "But deeds wear breeches."

Fernandez, Pelayo and Torres are thorough professionals. They reported on Carranza's bucking a Swiss lawyer parachuting into the case, "absolving" the Marcoses. This would delay return of the money.

"Swiss federal authorities confirmed existence of more substantial accounts of the late dictator Marcos' estate other than the recovered $683-million Swiss escrow funds," they added.

But Imelda complained. And a sympathetic Flores wrote: Madame "correctly pointed out" the PCCG official and journalists "failed to present any evidence that Marcos was ever convicted as a thief.

"Without such conviction, any reference to the late president as a thief may be considered malicious and therefore libelous," he added. "Malice on the journalists' part is presumed when they published the false statement of Carranza." "To some lawyers, all facts are created equal," Justice Felix Frankfurter once observed. Thus, Carranza argued in his counter-affidavit: "Existence of the Marcos dictatorship is a matter of fact."

Fact: The PCGG recovered P25.5 billion from sale of sequestered Marcos real property and shares.

Fact: The levy, wrung from coconut farmers by martial law decrees—now swollen to almost P130 billion—were "public funds," not a cronies' kitty, the Supreme Court ruled in 2001.

Fact: Real estate and income tax deficiency bills—P23.2 billion against the Marcos estate and P18.5 billion against Ferdinand Jr.—were enforceable, the high court ruled in January 1999 "with finality."

Fact: Marcos took over Meralco with a P10,000 check—balance to be paid "when and if able"—under martial law while Eugenio Lopez Jr. was held hostage in Fort Bonifacio.

"Meralco's sale was a giveaway to save the life of my son," then dying Eugenio Lopez Sr. told Philippine News' Nick Benosa in San Francisco on Dec. 31, 1974.

Fact: After massive frauds, Ricardo Cardinal Vidal—speaking on behalf of the Catholic bishops—said the 1986 snap elections lost "all legitimacy."

Fact: At Edsa I, Juan Ponce Enrile detailed how Marcos stole the snap elections. In his native Cagayan, Enrile revealed 350,000 votes had been swiped from Cory Aquino.

Filipino experience with the "New Society" includes the fact that the Marcoses, Fabian Ver, Eduardo Cojuangco, et al. fled, aboard Chinooks, a few steps ahead of irate people pouring into Malacañang from Edsa I.

The Guinness Book of World Records gave the Marcos regime top billing in its crime section for years. Former Senate President Jovito Salonga pegs the Marcos fortune at $5 billion to $10 billion. "Life of the law itself has not been logic," Oliver Wendell Holmes noted. "It has always been experience."

So, will Makati prosecutors sue others who, going by bitter experience, believe—and say—the Marcos regime was anything but democratic?

They'd have to indict Corazon Aquino, the Catholic bishops, Associated Press, Justice Isagani Cruz, Senators Herherson Alvarez and Aquilino Pimentel, Industrialist Oscar Lopez, Guinness to start with.

Add search engines like www.google.com, with over 19,100 "Marcos dictatorship" entries. The Ateneo and Wisconsin Universities organized "Legacies of the Marcos Dictatorship" conferences. Yale published "Closer Than Brothers" on dictatorship's impact on PMA graduates, Cornell did "Marcos and Martial Law in the Philippines." Still with us, Honorable Prosecutors?

Our history is a "narrative of erasures." Madame Marcos "wants the Department of Justice to rule that Ferdinand Marcos is not a dictator... and thief," Carranza writes. "Since (she) cannot change history, she wants the DOJ to do it for her."

In his arrival speech—never read because of his tarmac assassination—Sen. Benigno Aquino spoke of "history's initial assessment" of a supine Supreme Court that, in the name of law, ignored habeas corpus petitions.

Aquino's blood wrote that "initial assessment," underscoring: libertry is secure only if law enforcers worked by Leviticus' unyielding standard: "You shall not defer to the great but, in righteousness, shall you judge your neighbor."

* * *

E-mail: juan_mercado@pacific.net.ph

Proof

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

GLORIA Macapagal-Arroyo's camp says, in reaction to the four other presidential candidates demanding GMA to stop using taxpayers' money to campaign, that they have no proof for their allegations.

Huh? What kind of proof do you need? All you have to do is look around you.

No one, not even Malacañang, denies that the billboards that line up the road going to Baguio, Nueva Ecija, Bulacan, Metro Manila and Cebu among others, billboards 2 ft by 8 ft to 4 ft by 8 ft in size and carrying an outsized picture of GMA, are paid for by public funds. No one, not even Malacañang, denies the PhilHealth cards, which give carriers certain medical benefits and which again carry the picture of GMA, are paid for by public funds. No one, not even Malacañang, denies that the ads produced by the various departments that again carry the picture of GMA and extol her presumed accomplishments are paid for by public funds.

No one denies they are paid for by our money. The only question is: Are they election materials?

There is only one answer: Yes.

At the very least, even if you grant that they are not GMA campaign materials but government information materials, you must ask what kind of priorities GMA has. At the time the other presidential candidates signed the statement protesting GMA's use of public funds, the jeepney drivers stopped plying their routes, paralyzing many parts of the country. Some commuters were sympathetic, saying the drivers were not unlike them, they too needed income badly, and given how hard life is today, with the prices of *sari-sari* store fare rising everywhere, they were entitled to some relief. Most others were bitter and complained that the additional few centavos of jeepney fare added up to a pretty penny and bore a hole through their pockets.

These are people to whom a few centavos mean the difference between food and hunger, life and death. These are people whom government informs each time they demand an increase in pay or fare that the public treasury is bare and the economy cannot bear the impact of a fare or wage increase because it is inflationary. Yet in the face of this, the same government can afford to produce billboards 4 ft by 8 ft for no other purpose than to tell the people GMA cares for them? It can afford to produce ads that run every break in NBA games that tell the people GMA is their savior from wind, rain and lahar? It can afford to produce signs, posters and cards that tell the sick, the elderly and the dying the services that go to them are not theirs by right but a boon from their President?

GMA says this is not campaigning but governing. Well, if that is the quality of her governance, then clearly she is unfit to govern.

The only comparable image of profligacy is Imelda squandering the people's money because, as she put it, the people wanted her to look beautiful for them, so that they could forget their hunger when they looked up at her.

And that is granting they are not election materials. Look again at those huge billboards along half-built roads and bridges where GMA's face dwarfs everything else, and ask yourself if they are not election materials. Look again at the PhilHealth cards—it is not true by the way that GMA's picture has been in them since 2001, as Francisco Duque alleges, several doctors have shown me their PhilHealth cards dating back to 2001 and they do not have GMA's picture on them; that is a recent phenomenon—and ask yourself if they are not election materials. Look again at that PCSO ad where GMA is shown to be the source of salvation of disaster victims and where Honeygirl de Leon intimates that aiding disaster victims is a GMA vision and not a natural right of victims, and ask yourself if they are not election materials.

What proof do you need? GMA's face assaults you everywhere, reminding you where your taxes went. To aid GMA win a second term.

Of course, the Comelec will not find it so. You have commissioners who cannot see the difference between a company bidding for automation that has been in existence for three years or more and one that has been so for only 10 days, you cannot expect them to see the difference between government information materials and GMA election materials. While at this, what is this stupidity about running after MegaPacific Inc. to give back the money, as GMA has been posturing of late? She wants to run after anybody, she should run after Benjamin Abalos who chose MegaPacific over everybody else. She wants to run after anybody, she should run after the commissioners who approved it en banc. They are the culprits there. They should be jailed.

And of course the courts may not find it so, too. The law in this country bears little resemblance to justice, and even justices have been known to exist to find ways to get around the law rather than uphold it. I understand Tony Carpio is still busy trying to get the other justices to dismiss outright the case demanding that GMA go on leave while campaigning.

But in the end, it is neither the Comelec nor the courts who will decide the case. It is the citizens. It is the voters. It is you and I. In the end, the case will be brought to a court higher than the Supreme Court, and that is the court of public opinion where sovereign will resides. That is the polling place where the power of the vote resides. Of course, that may not preclude the prosecution of the wrongdoers after the elections. Malversation is a crime, and any use of public funds other than the purposes for which they were stipulated is malversation.

But meanwhile, well, you have commuters and drivers fighting over several centavos on one hand and GMA conscripting billions of pesos of their money to regale us with her face on the other:

What more proof do you want?

‘Kurot sa puso’

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

A STILL undisclosed nationwide survey conducted from March 13 to 15 indicated it's a dead heat between Fernando Poe Jr. and Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, with their ratings at 32 and 31.3 percent, respectively; Raul Roco has plummeted to 13.2 percent, and is now tied with Panfilo Lacson, who has inched up. Bro. Eddie Villanueva has also inched up now to 2.6 percent. On the other hand, Noli de Castro has pulled away from Loren Legarda with 49 percent versus her 36.1 percent and Hermie Aquino at 3.6 percent.

With the statistical dead heat between the two top contenders, their battle will be fought among the *masa*, the social classes D and E that command some 72 percent of the votes. The surveys have shown that FPJ draws his support mainly from these classes, but GMA seems not about to abdicate this turf without a fight.

* * *

GMA has her projects for the poorer sectors such as her "Patubig" program and the health cards. But what seems to be catching attention is the change in the candidate herself. Some weeks back I wrote of the observation of Bulacan Rep. Reynalina "Neneng" Nicolas about how GMA has learned how to appeal to the *masa* and that she's now scoring points with them. In a chat I had with Speaker Joe de Venecia's wife, Gina, the morning after she gathered a bevy of movie and TV stars at her residence for an advance birthday blowout for the President last March 30, Gina recounted the observation that TV talk show hosts Kris Aquino and Boy Abunda made at the party about the "new GMA." Kris and Boy were with GMA in her first sortie in Laguna last Jan. 11, where she kicked off her campaign, and since then they went around with her recently in several places, notably in Quezon City. The two TV stars noted that where before GMA projected some kind of insecurity over how the *masa* crowd felt about her, she has now become more relaxed; in turn, note the two, the crowds are now receiving her more warmly than ever. As Kris put it, GMA now has "the ambiance, the aura of a winner."

* * *

It seems that before, the masa perception was that GMA is "*puro talino, walang puso* (all brains, no heart)." But those who accompany her now note that she's connecting, exhibiting what the *masa* terms "*kurot sa puso.*" Gina de Venecia, who accompanies GMA in many sorties, points out that the campaign seems to be a huge learning experience for the President, in that she now has her finger on the pulse of the people. With this she can govern a divided nation and perhaps heal its wounds, says Gina, who readily confesses that she thought she is already "so *masipag*" in campaigning, until she started going with GMA. I am nowhere compared to GMA's *kasipagan*, muses Gina.

But whether GMA can break away from the statistical tie with FPJ and surge to victory on May 10 remains to be seen.

* * *

Media have hyped the presence of movie stars in FPJ's rallies, led by comedian Dolphy, logically because he came from the entertainment industry. Who then among the stars can be for GMA, is the question many ask. Former MTRCB chief Manoling Morato was recently quoted over TV asserting that many stars are for GMA, except that "they are afraid to come out." But if Gina's birthday blowout is any indication, GMA has her own stars from several generations.

Aside from Kris Aquino and Boy Abunda, among those who came were Nora Aunor, "*my kakambal*" as GMA called her; Dawn Zulueta, Cesar Montano, Ai-Ai de las Alas, Bayani Agbayani, Assunta de Rossi (wife of Negros Rep. Jules Ledesma), Angelica Jones, Sunshine Cruz, Cherie Gil, Mikee Cojuangco, Bobby Andrews, Al Tantay, Daisy Romualdez, Albert Martinez, Elizabeth Ramsey, Raymond Bagatsing, "Star in a Million" winner Erik Santos, Smokey Manaloto, FPJ leading lady Elizabeth Oropesa, and Jean Saburit. Also present were Viva Films stalwart Vic del Rosario, directors Behn Cervantes and Laurice Guillen, former Ilocos Sur Gov. Chavit Singson and GMA's running mate, Noli de Castro with wife Arlene. K-4 senatorial candidate Bong Revilla was represented by his wife, Lani Mercado.

* * *

Gina de Venecia's mom, Sampaguita Pictures producer Azucena Vera Perez, was also there to support GMA. "Like a mother to her children, *ayokong masubo sila sa magulo*," she was quoted as saying, referring to FPJ and her old star Susan Roces. Ms Perez's niece, actress Charlene Gonzales, and Aga Muhlach couldn't make it due to tapings, but Charlene's mom, Elvie Gonzales, came with her *balae*, Anita Muhlach, "to show support for GMA." Interestingly, Ms Perez's other daughter, Marichu P. Maceda, is deeply involved with the FPJ campaign. Like many families this season, the Vera Perez family is split up politically.

* * *

I asked Gina's writer, Gypsy, whether the stars came because they just couldn't say no to the hostess. Gypsy said they checked first and the stars all wanted to be counted for GMA. In her welcome remarks, Gina said that if the film community has a soft heart for GMA, it's due to various measures she has taken in its support; among them were the creation of the Film Development Council that grants 100 percent tax rebates to well-made films; the P50-million fund for the annual Metro Manila Film Festival to encourage the creation of better scripts and films; her "unconditional" support in the anti-piracy campaign, shown in her appointment of industry members such as Bong Revilla and Edu Manzano as chairpersons of the Videogram Regulatory Board, and her full support to the Film Ratings Board's efforts to create quality films. There is also her effort to renovate the Metropolitan Theater in Liwasang Bonifacio, the pre-war venue of *zarzuelas*.

GMA, who showed up in a sheer cobalt blue and gold tube/pants outfit with jacket, was said to be touched by the stars' turnout for her, and promised even greater support for the movie industry.

Ho y Cruz

HUMAN FACE

Ma. Ceres P. Doyo

WHAT does it profit a university to confer an honorary degree on a gambling mogul, supposedly one of the world's richest men, who figured in the previous disgraced administration's aborted move to raise the gambling culture and addiction of this country notches higher? Pray tell, what message does this convey to the young graduates?

To the board of trustees of the Angeles University Foundation (AUF), may I say this in Filipino—*dinuraan ninyo ang mga* graduates *ninyo, binastos ninyo sila*. You spat on them, you dishonored them. You will go down in history as the educational institution that gifted its graduates with this ultimate insult. Doctor of humanities, anyone?

Cara y cruz? One does not know which way this gambling country goes. Heads I win, tails you lose—seems to be the dictating rule in the losing battle against gambling lords and their academic fans. Ah, but every once in a while a voice rises above the din to cry, "Wrong." That is the voice of Archbishop Oscar Cruz of Pangasinan.

A few days to Holy Week and a gambling mogul (lord, king, baron, czar) from Hong Kong and an anti-gambling archbishop and canon lawyer, figure in front-page news. This was over the conferment of a university honorary degree on the gambling lord and the archbishop's protest and return of his own honorific title.

A few days ago, AUF in Angeles City, Pampanga laid out the red carpet for the 80-ish Stanley Ho to give him a honorary doctorate degree. He came aboard his private jet that landed at the Clark Special Economic Zone. He was met by supposed presidential adviser on foreign investments Dan Roleda who supposedly came aboard a government helicopter. Inquirer Northern Luzon Bureau's Tonette Orejas took the photo of that airport meeting. Never heard of Roleda, Malacañang quickly reacted, suggesting that the man in the photo might not be Roleda.

But Roleda or no Roleda, the fact is, this Ho is now the toast of a Pampanga academic community.

Three years ago, Ho floated in with his phantasmagoric casino-restaurant into Manila Bay and into the Estrada administration. The casino never got to operate, thanks to the protests, but it remained docked near the Cultural Center complex for a long time (I think it's still there) perhaps waiting for the right wind to blow.

The suggestion that Ho might have added to the campaign chests of politicians is certainly an issue but that has yet to be proven. But what AUF did say was that Ho was "involved in other philanthropic, civic and service-oriented undertakings."

Jesus H. Christ, this country is teeming with unsung and unrecognized individuals who selflessly work for this woebegone country, and AUF had to look to other shores for a casino king for an honoree?

What indeed are those "philanthropic, civic and service-oriented undertakings" of Ho that earned him the unanimous approval of the AUF board? Note unanimous. Note too that the current chair of the AUF board is Pampanga Archbishop Paciano Aniceto. One of the trustees is Diosdado Macapagal Jr., the President's brother.

Archbishop Cruz, Aniceto's predecessor and himself an AUF honorary degree recipient, sent back his citation in protest. He was not questioning AUF's honoring Ho, he said, he just did not want to belong to the same league. Cruz, former head of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines now heads the bishops' anti-gambling campaign.

If I were Cruz, so as not to be labeled pharisaical, I would have said it the other way around. Like, "I can't do anything about the fact that AUF put me and Ho in the same company, but I do protest that AUF would honor him in front of thousands of young graduates."

I don't think Cruz is being pharisaical. You know that parable about the Pharisee and the publican where the Pharisee deems himself clean and sinless before God and looks down on the sinners. Now be careful about turning around that parable to coddle evil doers and to mock those who uphold what is right. Jesus dined with sinners, yes, but he did not tell them, yeah, you're cool. He had a scathing mouthful for the incorrigible, like "brood of vipers" and "whitened sepulchers."

I note with frustration how people who do immense good sometimes don't want to be recognized or talk about what they've accomplished. Is that false humility or what? Afraid they might be called *mayabang*? And so the corrupt strut about smelling like roses, shout from the housetops and advertise what they have accomplished through their illegally earned money. Foundations here, foundations there.

Last January when I interviewed former President Cory Aquino for a feature piece, she brought up the need for more stories about the good people who are doing their part out there to serve their fellow Filipinos. I couldn't agree more. As a journalist, I would admit that I have a nose for the rotten, and that's fine, but I also do have an eye for little shining spots and the hidden glow of heroism.

Right now I know of three book projects that aim to provide more inspiring real-life stories for the young and the not so young, stories about the great deeds of Filipinos and other Asians. Yes, I am doing my bit for those projects, and yes, this eats into my weekends.

A theology professor was shocked to find out how her students (mostly religious) knew so little about the events of two, three decades ago and the heroism of some of the best and the brightest who fell in the night or risked their lives so that others may live. "Many of them have no clue," she gasped.

Don't serve them Ho. Ho who?

* * *

Send comments to cerespd@info.com.ph

An essential book

THE LONG VIEW

Manuel L. Quezon III

LAST week the Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism launched "The Rulemakers: How the Wealthy and Well-born Dominate Congress." It is one of those books every journalist, political scientist, student and person concerned with public affairs should have on their shelf. It follows on the heels of an extremely useful handbook published by the PCIJ which explains government (and I continue to be astounded by the large number of students who take up political science and history who don't have a clue how government works, mainly because information isn't accessible on the Internet, I'd guess).

The book surveys nearly a century of almost continuous legislative development (and more so, if you go back to the Malolos Congress of 1898). It helps put our legislators and the legislature in perspective, explaining why some political clans have flourished, others have failed and faded away, and how Congress, as an institution, fosters the interests of those elected to it.

A particular pleasure for me was to see some of the points raised in this column validated by the PCIJ's independent research. One example is the effect Republic Act 599 (passed in 1953, and not 1956 as I erroneously mentioned in a previous column), which abolished block voting, had on the strength and effectiveness of political parties.

What is extremely fascinating about the book is how it explains so much that goes beyond the scope of Congress. The section, for example, on family, or dynastic politics, indicates the prevalence of the dynastic framework in our society: we have dynasties of doctors, of lawyers, teachers, politicians—and revolutionaries. While the PCIJ does not go as far as what I often like to say—that in every Filipino revolutionary, there is a cacique yearning to break free--the book's analysis of provincial, and familial, politics and culture helps to explain why our political system remains so appallingly enduring.

The only weakness of the book, since it takes such a long view of the legislature, legislation and legislators, is the absence of testimony from past legislators to help explain why Congress is the way it is, today. For example, reference to the memoirs of the late Jose Romero (father of columnist Rudy Romero and renowned director Eddie Romero, and some sort of uncle, I believe, to LDP spokesperson former Rep. Mike Romero), would have given a clear, and in a sense, damning explanation of the whole racket concerning congressional allowances. In his memoirs (titled "Not So Long Ago"), Romero explains how his colleagues in the 1945 Congress, first voted themselves back pay, wrecking their reputation among the people, and then instituted allowances as a means to supplement their salaries, which Romero, to his credit, condemned as an abuse and a scandal.

The book also fails to look into the provision of the present Constitution which established a year-round session for Congress, instead of the 100-day legislative session ordained by previous charters. A Congress holding office all year round means a much more expensive, and probably, far less efficient, legislature. After all, you can only think up so many laws, and act on them, in a year; plus the Filipino propensity to drag one's feet until faced with an actual deadline removes pressure from the legislators to perform their duties within a specified time frame. Nor does the book examine how legislators use gerrymandering—the redrawing of district lines to create politically "safe" enclaves for themselves—to create fiefdoms they can more easily dominate.

As usual, though, one cannot avoid a small amount of nit picking. The photographs are a pleasure to look at and betray a certain amount of malicious wit on the part of the PCIJ; but you have the truly shocking miscaptioning of a photo on P. 76, which shows Field Marshal Douglas MacArthur addressing a joint session of Congress in 1945, in its temporary home in a schoolhouse on Lepanto Street. The caption, instead, says the photo is of MacArthur presiding "over a special session of the 1928 Philippine Legislature. He is flanked by Speaker Manuel Roxas on his right and Senate President Sergio Osmeña on his left." First of all, Osmeña was never Senate president; second of all, no one wore khaki in Congress before 1945; third, no non-member of the legislature could ever preside over a session. The photo is most likely of a special session in which the legislature, presided over by Roxas as Senate president (and with the Speaker covered by the figure of MacArthur in the photo), and with Osmeña, as President and guest, conferred Philippine citizenship on MacArthur.

There is, too, a table on P. 256 which states a "3rd National Assembly, 1941-1946," when the National Assembly was superceded by a Congress elected in 1941, but which did not sit until 1945. Another egregious error is the constant mention of "Mar" Roxas as "Manuel Roxas III" when he is Manuel Roxas II. But it is testimony to the high level of research and scholarship of the PCIJ that the errors are so few, and generally, so harmless. The PCIJ has done a great public service by pointing out the inconsistencies in, and tragedy of , our political system. Unlike Britain, which was dominated by an oligarchy but which in turn gave way to a broader democracy, our leading families have tended to be survivors. The only saving grace of an oligarchy is noblesse oblige. And in the PCIJ's book, it is woefully apparent that it is a concept our leading families all too rarely appreciate.

* * *

The book can be ordered directly from the PCIJ, Tel. No. 410-4768, or e-mail them at pcij@pcij.org. As always, comments are welcome at www.quezon.ph

Write, read, live

YOUNG BLOOD

Carissa Villacorta

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—Ed.

WHEN I'm in the huge New York Public Library, just three blocks from my office, or a bookstore (especially the used-book types), I think to myself, "So many books and so little time!"

When I see all my drafts of articles, written-out journals or my ideas on my Palm Pilot, but most especially every time I experience, see or hear something that I want to share (and believe me that happens in New York every single minute), I wish I could just sit and write for two weeks straight, finish the writing and share the things that other people might also find interesting. I even thought of applying to be columnist for a weekly newspaper so that writing would become a duty and not an option. And then I realized it was not only a duty for me, but for everyone who has experienced, laughed, wept, thought, lived and learned. They ought to share.

Just when I'm convinced I could read all day, I reach my destination and I have to pick up my bags. After several hours of writing, my hands, my back and even my butt ache. And then the parties, and the job, and the family and the body and God.

So I say, one must have time to read. To learn from other people we've never met, who've lived in another time, for we can never go back in time and experience what they had. As well as from the people who've chosen the fields that we have not, and in fact have earned expertise in them, like geologists, artists or politicians. For even the most curious citizen of the world has to choose a profession and have one or a few passions and cannot be all those amazing people in one. And no matter how true the theory of six degrees of separation may be, we cannot meet and speak with all these people. So thank God they wrote. And thank God for publishers. And thank God for books and bookstores and the people who sell them second-hand in the streets for a dollar each.

I think the reason why there are so many used-book stores is that a book can be reread by the same person or passed on from one to the other in the same generation or the next—endlessly. A book is not like a piece of clothing that wears out. Books never really expire. The first editions and the current revision of any book may be equally valuable. In the simplest or most complex books, there is always a unique insight or deduction.

You have to have time to live. Apply the proper etiquette at a dinner party, according to Betty Ford. Review "Principles of Internal Medicine" before giving a diagnosis. Swipe a copy of that "Tourist Guide" once you arrive at the Geneva airport. By doing your job, being with your family, feeling your emotions, meeting more people, caring for your health, getting enough sleep and going out on dates, you live your life. The advice that you receive, the mistakes that you remember and the books that you've read help you live it well.

And finally, you have to have time to write, because you also have something to share—an expertise, an experience, a thought. Not everyone's an able director or talented singer who can star in a movie or compose a song that will be sung, heard and seen long after their time, but everyone who can hold a pen and tell a story can write. And hopefully people of our generation and the next, of this continent or the one beside it, may gain something from it.

Being published or having an impact should not be a worry. Just write it somewhere, anywhere (find the time, take a second) and it will be read.

Carissa Villacorta, 24, is connected with the Philippine Consulate General in New York.

Empty

Fred Chiu

SOMEONE resigned from her job today at the office, someone nice and sweet and funny and naughty and fun to be with. A friend, actually.

I was running late (again) for work and so I hurried to log in. Behind the table, just a few steps away, was my boss' room. I could see my boss talking to someone and I quickly realized it was Rita. I thought, "What the heck, it's early in the morning and Rita's already reporting to the principal? She must still be trying to get that Employee of the Year award."

A few minutes later, Rita went to my cubicle and I immediately kidded her about talking so early in the principal's office.

She smiled and signaled that she wanted to write something down. So I gave her a pencil and a pad of paper. And she wrote in neat letters the three words: "resign *na ako*."

"Ows?!" was all I could blurt out. I looked at her incredulously. My face was asking the question this time.

She was nodding and half-smiling, and I was stunned. I slowly erased the words she had written, hoping that somehow it would make her take them back.

"I told him that I'm planning to go back to school again," Rita said.

"*Anong sabi ni* sir?"

"*Wala*. 'OK.'"

Rita went back to her cubicle. I tried to gather my thoughts as a sense of helplessness started to grow inside me. I turned on my computer and sent her an instant message: "*Napaka*-unfair *naman*... only one person is going to be happy with this development, while 21 others are going to be sad."

She replied: "*Binilang mo talaga, ha. Sira. dapat* happy *lahat.*"

I typed back: "Happy *rin*, in some ways... and quite envious, too!"

Sigh. Another employee is about to leave the company, most probably for good. Another seat will be left unoccupied, at least for a few weeks. More tasks will be headed my way for sure, and sadly, another friend will be leaving us behind.

I know that is how things are in the industry. It is but natural for people to come and go. I've been working for more than three years now, and I've seen people, friends, coming and going. But it is just now that I realize that once they go, they seem to fade slowly, gradually and become more and more distant. Almost daily e-mails turn to thrice a week, and then to once a week, to once every two weeks, to once every month... and finally to when you feel like it. Friday gimmicks soon become a monthly happening.

You know that your life will go on, and theirs, too. But sometimes you can't help but think about them, about the good and bad times you've been through together, about the silly stories and green jokes you shared, about the sometimes torturous tasks you've been assigned, about the ridiculous conspiracy theories you came up with to explain the latest moves by the management. And that's when it seems as if someone's missing, as if someone did not go to work that day. That's when you will feel an empty space inside you. That's when you realize, that you are already missing them.

Fred Chiu, 24, works as a programmer at Terasystems Inc.

Please send feedback to
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Editor **Juan V. Sarmiento Jr.**

Noli: I am my own man

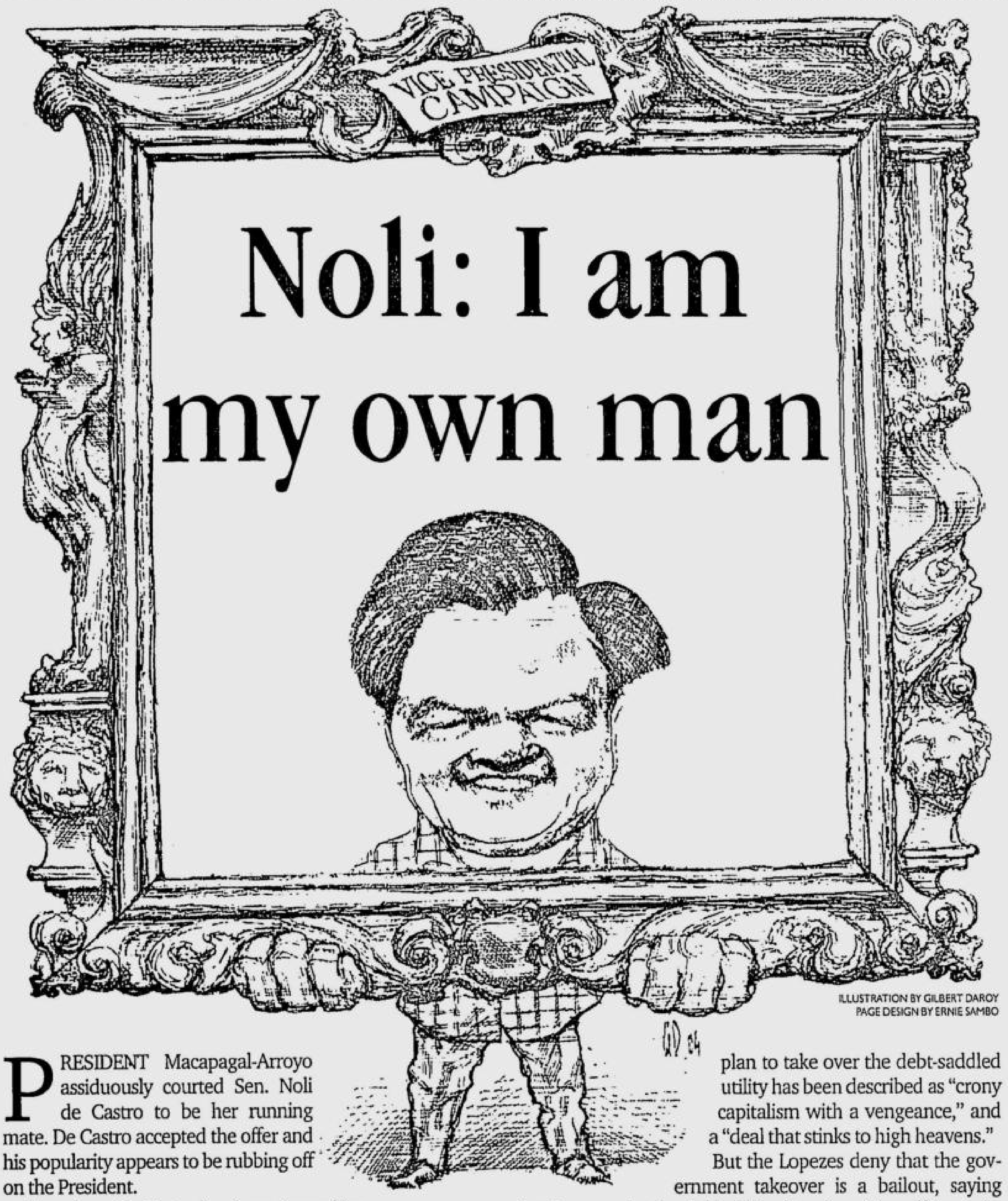

ILLUSTRATION BY GILBERT DAROY
PAGE DESIGN BY ERNIE SAMBO

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo assiduously courted Sen. Noli de Castro to be her running mate. De Castro accepted the offer and his popularity appears to be rubbing off on the President.

Since then, De Castro has been dogged by allegations that he agreed to be Ms Macapagal's running mate because his "principals," the owners of a broadcast network where he is a talent, have received concessions from Malacañang.

One such concession, according to critics of the administration, is the "bailout" of the Maynilad Water Services, one of the companies controlled by the Lopezes. The government plan to take over the debt-saddled utility has been described as "crony capitalism with a vengeance," and a "deal that stinks to high heavens."

But the Lopezes deny that the government takeover is a bailout, saying that Benpres, the family's holding firm, is writing off its equity investment of $80 million. Ms Macapagal, for her part, claims that she approved the reverse privatization of Maynilad to ensure clean supply of water to residents of Metro Manila.

De Castro has ben called a "surrogate" of the Lopezes. But he says that he has not been dictated upon or influenced by anyone to act in a certain way. "I am my own man," he declares.

Public good should prevail over private interest

By Noli de Castro
Vice Presidential candidate
K-4 Coalition

Kabayan believes in the collective strength and inherent capacity of the Filipino people to be a great nation. The primary duty of government is to lead and guide the people toward the common good.

In order to achieve national success, the country's leaders must have credibility, competence and accountability.

As Vice President, I will be an instrument of unity in the next administration. I will encourage all sectors and political groups to share the burden of governance. Filipinos must unite and work behind the common goal of national development.

At the core of my platform of government are social services, education and job opportunities for all, environmental protection, and sustainable development.

ABS-CBN, Lopez family

Contrary to what my detractors want to portray to the public, I am my own man. I have not been dictated upon or influenced by anyone to act in a certain way. Public good and general welfare should prevail over private interests at all times.

Issues concerning water and electricity, two very important utilities for our countrymen, must be resolved with the interest of the consumers foremost in mind. I also stand for absolute transparency in all government negotiations with private utility companies so that the public may know how a decision came about.

Poverty

Poverty is an unacceptable human condition. Although prevalent in the country today, it is not immutable. Public policy and executive action can, and must, eliminate poverty. Since it is a complex issue, the strategies to reduce poverty must be comprehensive to address all its many causes.

Sustainable, pro-poor economic growth and social development are the key elements in any program for reducing poverty. These must be complemented by sound macroeconomic management and good governance. Economic development must be labor-absorbing, environmentally sustainable, and accompanied by policies and programs that mitigate inequalities and facilitate income and employment generation for the poor.

Delivery of social services must be improved by strengthening existing institutions like the Department of Social Welfare and Development.

Unemployment

Employment must be directly linked to comprehensive socialized housing, farm projects and infrastructure programs. To generate jobs, we must enhance micro- and small-infrastructure projects such as farm-to-market roads, irrigation and transport facilities.

I believe that despite the growing demand for Filipino workers abroad, we must prioritize local employment over overseas placements of skilled Filipino labor. But because many Filipinos are taking advantage of the international demand for skilled labor, the government must ensure the welfare of every overseas Filipino worker.

Debt, deficit

We must honor all legal international and domestic obligations entered into by previous governments. In order to better manage our debt servicing, we must appeal for a mutually beneficial debt restructuring arrangements with creditors. I am in favor of imposing a cap on borrowings and a ban on behest loans and illegal government loan guarantees.

To eradicate the fiscal deficit and finance new government programs, we must:

- Increase revenue collection, computerize the Bureau of Internal Revenue and Bureau of Customs, and reform the tax system by making it simpler for taxpayers and more efficient for collectors.
- Implement a prudent expenditure system and exercise fiscal discipline and accountability.
- Adopt policies to reduce charges on remittances from abroad.

Globalization

I believe that globalization is inevitable. To protect the country from the detrimental consequences of free trade, we must:

- Provide adequate safety nets to local industries in line with the country's World Trade Organization commitments.
- Broaden the economic, political and cultural interactions with Asean member states, Japan, South Korea, Taiwan and the People's Republic of China.
- Establish favorable financial and technology transfer arrangements with other countries.

Local industries are the engine of the country's economy. We must intensify development programs for key industries, e.g., agriculture, information technology, telecommunications and services. We must support domestic industries to raise their level of competitiveness, explore new markets for exports and strengthen existing relations with trading partners.

The government must also provide small and medium enterprises with direct access to credit facilities. Social safety net must also be extended to the vulnerable and disadvantaged.

Corruption

There must be expeditious investigation and resolution of graft and corruption cases. I believe that complete computerization of the Bureau of Internal Revenue and the Bureau of Customs will not only drastically improve revenue generation but will also eliminate graft and corruption in these agencies. Furthermore, we must institute the electronic procurement system in all national and local government offices, including government-owned and controlled corporations.

I shall strive to restore people's confidence in government. Thus, we must uplift the morale of career service by institutionalizing merit-based systems and minimizing patronage in appointments and promotions. We must also strengthen the bureaucracy by making it leaner yet more responsive to peoples' needs. "Ghost" employees must be weeded out and the number of paid consultants and advisers limited.

I believe that the people's trust and confidence in government can be achieved if we:

- Institute measures to improve citizens' access to information regarding the performance of government.
- Lower the costs of transacting with government and cut red tape.
- Enhance citizens' powers of initiative, referendum and recall in order to contribute to more effective and meaningful change at the local level.

Pork barrel

As a senator, I experienced the advantages of having the authority to direct development funds for specific infrastructure projects. However, I feel that this is not consistent with the nature and principal purpose of the office of a legislator.

Should there be serious discussions on this issue in the future, I will be open to any proposal that will advance the interests of the greater majority.

Food security

The Philippines has rich natural resources that can be tapped to ensure food security in all regions. Budgetary allotments to agricultural programs and projects in the countryside, especially in Mindanao, must be sufficient for infrastructure, and harvest and post-harvest facilities. Development policies and projects in the countryside must be anchored on each region's forte in agriculture.

Due to recent advancement in meteorology, annual weather conditions can now be accurately predicted. Regional agriculture planning bodies may thus be set up to study, assess, recommend and monitor crop production appropriate for wet and dry seasons in their respective areas.

I am for the full and expeditious implementation of the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program. We must strengthen agrarian reform communities as an effective channel of support services.

We must also establish low-interest agricultural credit systems for small farmers, promote farmers' organization as an effective partner of the government, and empower them to have greater control of harvest, post-harvest and marketing facilities.

Environment

It is imperative that every Filipino be made environmentally responsible. We must strictly enforce existing laws and regulations for the protection and conservation of natural resources, including air, forests, seas and other bodies of water, and wildlife.

Because the Filipino youth are the future of our country, they should lead reforestation and conservation campaigns and actively take part in protecting the environment. In order to avert environmental disasters, we must strictly integrate the principle of sustainable development in all public, private, national and local programs.

Charter change

I am open to amendments to or revisions of the 1987 Constitution provided that these are in accordance with the collective will of the people. Any action to change the system of government must be done in accordance with the procedures mandated by the existing Constitution and accompanied by extensive consultations with the Filipino people.

People power

I shall uphold the constitutional right of the people to peacefully assemble and express their grievances. I believe that all disagreements in policies can be intelligently resolved by free discussions and peaceful negotiations. It is important to find solutions consistent with the common good.

Erap pardon

I believe that it is in the interest of former President Joseph Estrada and the country to allow the judicial process to take its due course.

Marcos ill-gotten wealth

Whatever is illegally acquired from public coffers must be returned. The Marcos cases are already before the courts. Thus, the decision, once it becomes final, must be executed in accordance with the order of the courts.

Insurgency

We must strengthen democratic processes (elections, legislation, people's participation) as an essential element in addressing the causes of rebellion and conflict. We must also pursue genuine and sincere efforts toward lasting peace with our countrymen belonging to the Communist Party of the Philippines and the Moro National Liberation Front.

In addition, we must institute government administrative reforms consistent with ethnic and religious diversity.

Terrorism

The Philippines must learn from the recent experiences of Turkey and Spain. Our law enforcement agencies and the public must remain vigilant at all times. An all out war against terrorism will not be effective unless the people actively participate in it.

RP-US ties

The Philippines must maintain its quality and mutually beneficial partnership with the United States.

Death penalty

I am in favor of amending the Death Penalty Law. In place of the death sentence, all found guilty of committing heinous crimes must be meted out life imprisonment without parole. Strict implementation of the law and intensified anti-crime programs are sufficient to solve criminality.

Supreme Court

The Supreme Court is an independent branch of the government of the Republic of the Philippines. The executive department must respect the Supreme Court's powers and functions as mandated by the Constitution.

Jueteng

I am against *jueteng* and any form of illegal numbers game. As a senator, I filed a bill seeking to increase the penalty for illegal numbers games, including *jueteng*.

Population

I support the current administration policy of promoting responsible parenthood, informed choice and birth spacing. I stand for the right of every woman and couple to choose the family planning method based on their personal beliefs, religious convictions and health requirements.

Divorce

I am for the preservation of the integrity of the family and shall uphold the sacred institution of marriage. However, I am open to discussions to amend the Family Code to allow the nullification of marriage between a victim of marital abuse and the party found guilty for such criminal act.

Abortion

I am against abortion and I shall uphold the constitutional provision giving protection to the life of the mother and the unborn.

Prostitution

I am against the prostitution of women and children. The government must ensure that Filipino women and children are protected from immoral and indecent means of livelihood. The Special Protection of Children Against Child Abuse, Exploitation and Discrimination Act, and the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act must be strictly enforced.

Gay rights

Everyone is entitled to equal protection of the law. Any form of discrimination against anyone must be prohibited.

Education

We must strengthen the educational system through effective budgetary allocation. Accessibility and affordability can be improved through a socialized tuition system. School buildings must be built and teachers must be motivated by increasing their monthly pay and ensuring its timely release.

The educational system must emphasize knowledge and skills needed for the modern global environment by giving priority to science and technology as a core educational requirement. We must strengthen the curriculum for character development, emphasizing Filipino language, traditional Filipino values, and civic consciousness such as respect for the rule of law, and love for God and country above self.

Housing

We must decongest urban centers by integrating housing policies with industrial and agricultural development programs. We must also facilitate the implementation of housing projects in priority areas and strengthen local government and private sector participation in housing programs.

Health care, malnutrition

The government must provide affordable health care services and medicine for the poor and rationalize health regulatory policies. Every Filipino must have health insurance through equitable health financing.

Illness, an inevitable element of living, can be prevented. The government must intensify immunization programs for diseases such as TB, polio and malaria, and prioritize public information on disease prevention and promote adequate nutrition. If the people are healthy, our productivity can be maximized.

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Rebs bar mayor from sorties, says gov

CAUAYAN CITY—Communist rebels operating in Isabela have stopped the reelectionist mayor of Benito Soliven town from campaigning in their controlled-areas until she paid the permit-to-campaign fees, Gov. Faustino Dy Jr. said.

Dy said Mayor Raymunda Domingo had asked him to send more policemen and Army soldiers to her town to prevent the rebels from harassing local candidates.

Domingo claimed that New People's Army rebels had asked for P150,000 cash and five Armalite rifles in exchange for access to remote villages in her town. She said the rebels had also stopped her supporters from putting up posters in some villages.

But Dy said Domingo refused to give in to the rebels' demand.

"Why (would we) give in to their demands? Local officials would just make them strong if they give them money and guns," Dy said.

He urged local officials to seek help from the police and military if rebels harassed them.

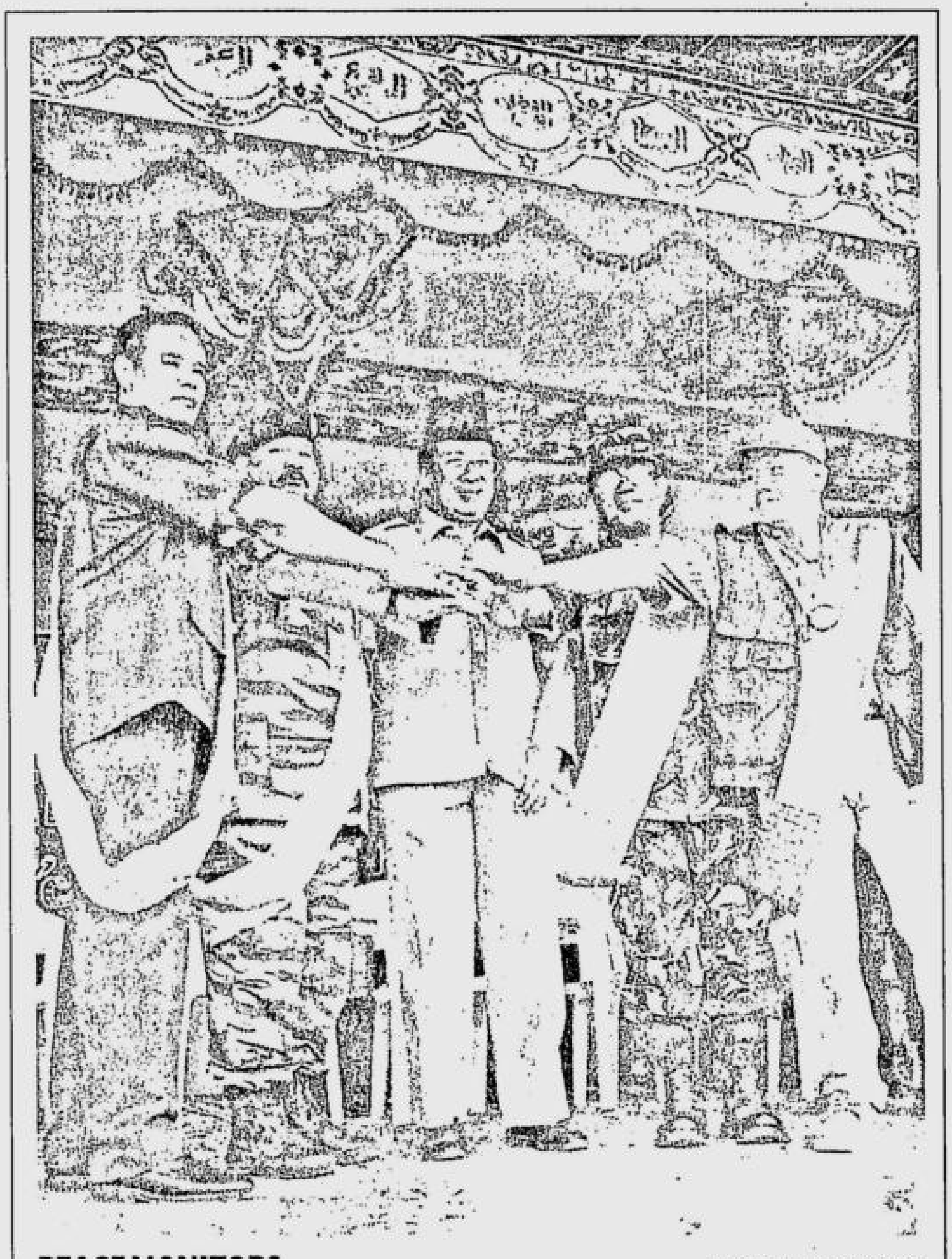
In Abra, the provincial police director assured the public that the police could maintain peace and order during the election season. Election-related violence and irregularities were reported in the province in past elections.

During a meeting with police and Commission on Elections officials on Wednesday, Senior Supt. Artemio Hicban, Abra police director, urged policemen in the province to remain impartial and not to favor any candidate.

Hicban said Lagayan town remains as an "area of immediate concern" while the towns of La Paz, Danglas, Bangued, Lagangilang, San Isidro and Tineg are considered "areas of concern" for this year's elections.

He said he had sent additional policemen to at least nine villages in Bangued.

Villamor Visaya Jr. and Artha Kira Paredes, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau



PEACE MONITORS

AL FRITZ ERMAC/CONTRIBUTOR

Members of the Committee for the Cessation of Hostilities of the Philippine government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, and the head of the advance party of the International Monitoring Team join hands for the success of the peace talks.

Bayan Muna to sue gov't, military for communist tag

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
PDI Visayas Bureau

ILOILO CITY—The party-list group Bayan Muna will file charges of violations of the election law against government and military officials who continue to link their group to communist rebels.

Bayan Rep. Siegfred Deduro said these include public officials who accused Bayan Muna representatives of channeling millions of pesos of pork barrel funds to the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) and its armed wing the New People's Army (NPA).

Among these officials is National Security Adviser Norberto Gonzales who accused Bayan Muna Rep. Satur Ocampo and former representatives Crispin Beltran and Liza Maza of funneling a total of P50 million in public funds yearly to the rebel movement since 2001.

Beltran and Maza were replaced by Joel Virador and Deduro, respectively in the party-list group, after the former two resigned to form their new party-list groups—Anakpawis for Beltran and Gabriela for Maza.

"They (government and military officials) violate the Omnibus Election Code (OEC) that forbids public officials [from] engaging in partisan political activity," Deduro told the INQUIRER.

The law defines partisan political activity as any act "designed to promote the election or defeat of a particular candidate or candidates to a public office."

Deduro said they were gathering pieces of evidence such as published news reports against the government and military officials.

He said the continued statements of officials linking them to the CPP and NPA are "part of a systematic campaign to demonize us justify armed attacks by government and paramilitary forces."

He cited the tampering of campaign posters of Bayan Muna, Anakpawis, Gabriela Women's Party, Anak ng Bayan, and Migrante.

The posters of these groups in Iloilo City have been smeared with "NPA" in red paint or with "Aton ini! (This is ours)," purportedly signed by the NPA.

"We can point to nobody else for these acts but to the government and military officials who have echoed the same line since we topped the party-list elections in 2001," said Deduro.

He said the funds allotted to three Bayan Muna representatives have been spent to nearly 700 public works projects nationwide with a minimum value of P500,000 for each project.

Deduro said they are confident they would top the May 10 elections and get the maximum three seats for a party-list group.

He cited a recent survey of the polling firm Pulse Asia where Bayan Muna rated 10.2 percent, topping all other party-list groups.

Saudi police invite several persons for questioning on Pinay OFW death

LIBUNGAN, North Cotabato— The Saudi police have invited several persons for questioning about the death of Nelsa Villarta, who was murdered last week in Riyadh, the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration in Central Mindanao said yesterday.

Abdulgani Umag, OWWA-12 director, said among those invited were Nelsa's employer Mohammad Abdullah Al Hamed and her hometown friend Pio Tancio.

Nelsa disappeared on March 22. Five days later, her decomposing body was found. Her legs were cut off and stuffed in a garbage bag.

It was Tancio who informed her family about her death.

Umag said it was Al Hamed who identified the cadaver as that of Nelsa's.

He said Tancio was investigated on because her mobile number appeared on the victim's cellular phone.

Nelsa's family said Tancio was trying desperately to reach Nelsa on the day of her disappearance because he was puzzled why the OFW was not returning his calls.

Nelsa and Tancio regularly talk on the phone.

Umag said Tancio was later released by the Saudi police in Riyadh.

After his release, Tancio informed Nelsa's family in Barangay Malengen here about the fate of the OFW.

Ric Villarta, Nelsa's husband, said the family is appealing to President Macapagal-Arroyo so that the body of his wife could be immediately flown home for burial.

Her father Paterno said the government should exert all efforts to bring those responsible for her death to jail.

Umag said the government was doing everything and it has been closely coordinating with the Saudi police.

As to the family's request for Nelsa's body to be flown home, Umag said it would not be easy at this time.

"We are doing everything to resolve the case of Villarta. However, since her case is a police matter, it would be difficult for us to ask for the immediate repatriation of her body from Riyadh because it will be used (in the investigation)," Umag said.

Nelsa previously worked in Hong Kong but decided to try her luck in Riyadh because of bigger pay.

Although she was already married, she still took care of her immediate family's needs such as their daily consumption and the education of her younger siblings. *Rosa-May V. de Guzman, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Bombo Radyo reopens

CAUAYAN CITY—The two radio stations ordered closed by the city government in February were finally opened on Tuesday after the Commission on Elections junked an appeal from city officials on the poll body's decision to allow the stations' operations.

Chief Supt. Jefferson Soriano, Cagayan Valley police director, and Senior Supt. Nelson Nario, Isabela police director, implemented the March 23 order of the Comelec at past 4 p.m., allowing the resumption of broadcasts of dzNC Bombo Radyo and its sister station dwIT-FM.

The city government on Feb. 17 closed the stations for the non-renewal of their business permits.

But Bombo Radyo officials sued the city government before the Comelec for supposedly violating election laws when they closed the stations.

They said the city government violated a rule that no business franchises or permits should be revoked within the election period.

The Comelec on March 23 ordered a status quo that paved the way for the resumption of operations of the stations. But the city government questioned the Comelec's authority to rule on the issue and again closed the stations.

Mayor Caesar Dy said he would abide by the Comelec order.

"As a loyal follower of our laws, I abide by the Comelec order," he said.

Dy, however, said they would continue to exhaust all legal means to prove that the radio stations' officials falsified their land conversion papers that led to the non-renewal of the stations' permits.

Ilagan Bishop Sergio Utleg, who earlier asked Dy to reopen the stations, welcomed the Comelec decision.

"This time, we will continue to have the medium of truth. Our vigilant quest for clean, honest and orderly elections will be boosted," Utleg said. *Villamor Visaya Jr., PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Party-list group hits failure to release activists

CALAMBA CITY—Two days after the second round of the peace negotiations between the communists and the government panel started in Oslo, Norway, a candidate of a Left-leaning party-list group yesterday assailed the failure of the government to fulfill its promise to release political detainees, including six farmers accused of killing members of a wealthy family in Mindoro.

Rafael Mariano of the Anakpawis party-list group said the militant peasant sector was growing tired of the alleged empty promises of the government panel to facilitate the unconditional release of political prisoners in the country.

Mariano said some of the political prisoners had started going into hunger strike to press for their release.

He then berated Silvestre Bello III, chief government negotiator, who, he said, had promised in behalf of the government to let go of at least 24 inmates being held for alleged political reasons before March 31.

He said Bello announced the pledge during the first round of the peace talks between the National Democratic Front and the government held in February.

"Bello and the government panel have been issuing out promises to release political prisoners supposedly to gain trust from the NDF. But since the resumption of the peace negotiations, no single political prisoner has been released," Mariano told the INQUIRER in a phone interview.

Instead, he said, the government's promises turned out to be "mere press releases."

He added: "We are sick and tired of the government's promises on the release of political prisoners."

Mariano, who also chairs the Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas (KMP), pressed for the immediate release of Mamburao, Occidental Mindoro farmers Manolito Matricio, Eduardo Hermoso, Ruben Balaguer, Mario Tobias, Joshua Ungsod and Gelito Bautista, who have been languishing in jail for a crime they did not commit.

The six, aptly called the Mamburao 6, were accused of killing two sons of former Rep. Ricardo Quintos in December 1997. Matricio was a former national council member of the KMP.

"The release of the Mamburao farmers is long overdue. Since the stalled peace talks in 2001, the release of the six farmers was already recommended by (the NDF and the government panel)," Mariano said in a separate statement.

He also hit Defense Secretary Eduardo Ermita and Norberto Gonzalez as "hawks" for intervening in the release of the six farmers and of more than 200 political prisoners in the country.

He claimed Ermita and Gonzalez's opposition "only showed the government's insincerity to achieve a just and lasting peace." *Marlon Ramos, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

ROUNDUP

Workers demand Cola

LEGAZPI CITY—Government employees in Albay are bent on claiming their cost of living allowance (Cola), which, they claimed, was suspended by Budget Secretary Emilia Boncodin. Boncodin, however, said last week that there is no legal basis for the claim of the employees. She said the Cola was already included in their regular monthly salaries. Provincial board member Ramon Lawenko, however, blamed the DBM for the employees' insistence. He said the DBM failed to publish the circular about Boncodin's ruling. Lawenko warned that should Boncodin remain adamant on her stand, they would go to court to find out who between them is right.

'Midnight' resolution

LEGAZPI CITY—Catanduanes Vice Gov. Cesar Sarmiento has accused Catanduanes Gov. Leandro Verceles Jr. of hosting a special session of the provincial board in his office to pass a resolution for the P81-million supplemental budget. He said the special session was conducted when majority of the board members were in a meeting with President Macapagal-Arroyo on March 13. He said seven of the 12 board members are required to have a quorum and for a session to legally proceed. Verceles, however, said the board members who attended the session just dropped by his office right after the session. He said the session was legal. *Ronnie Lorejo, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Rapist gets life term

BACOLOD CITY—The regional trial court has meted life imprisonment to an inmate for raping a student. Judge Roberto Chiongson told Fernando Fernandez to pay the victim P164,000 in damages. Court records showed that Fernandez was detained in 2002 and the victim was also detained in a cell accessible to male prisoners. The victim told the court that Fernandez grabbed her hand and pulled her to the comfort room where he raped her. But Fernandez claimed that the victim "welcomed the sexual intrusion or, at least, she failed to put up a strong and tenacious resistance," Chiongson noted. But the court did not give weight to his claim, saying rape victims cannot mount a physical struggle when they were gripped by overpowering fear. *Carla P. Gomez, PDI Visayas Bureau*

2 turtles freed

MARIBOJOC, Bohol—The Community Environment and Natural Resources Office (Cenro) freed two green turtles last March 15, a day after these were separately captured in the seas off Maribojoc town and Tagbilaran City. The first turtle was caught in the net of the fishermen in Barangay Poblacion, Maribojoc. The turtle measured 50 cm long and 46 cm wide and weighed about 2 kilograms. The second turtle was rescued by youths out swimming in the sea in Ubujan, Tagbilaran at about 3 p.m. on Sunday. It was about 46 cm long and 43.5 cm wide and tipped the scales at 9.5 kg. The turtle was brought to Maribojoc. Cenro officials fitted tags to the two turtles before releasing them to the sea. *Chito A. Fuentes, PDI Visayas Bureau*

Power for 2 cities, 2 towns

DUMAGUETE CITY—Two cities and two municipalities under the coverage of the Negros Oriental 1 Electric Cooperative (Noreco I) are now fully energized. Angelito Cariaga, Noreco I general manager, said the cities of Canlaon and Bais and the towns of Ayungon and Manjuyod are now fully serviced. Canlaon City was energized first week of February and Bais, last week. Ayungon and Manjuyod towns were completely energized last year. Of the 285 barangays within its coverage, 233 already have electric supply, Cariaga said. The remaining areas without electricity are Mabinay, Tayasan, Himalalud, La Libertad, Guihulngan and Vallahermoso. *Romy Amarado, PDI Visayas Bureau*

Marijuana vendor caught

BACOLOD CITY—A vegetable vendor is facing illegal drug possession charges after a kilo of suspected dried marijuana leaves was found stashed among the vegetables he was selling at a public market here. Marino Azucena, 45, of Barangay 19, here was charged with violation of the Comprehensive Dangerous Drugs Act of 2002. The Bacolod City Anti-Illegal Drugs Special Operation Task Group arrested Azucena after he sold for P500 a brick of dried marijuana leaves to a policeman posing as a buyer on March 11 at the Burgos public market here. The police also recovered 16 other bricks of dried marijuana leaves packed in newspaper sheets hidden among the vendor's vegetables. Azucena claimed it was the first time that he has sold marijuana, which he said was delivered to him on Wednesday by a person he claimed he did not know. *Carla P. Gomez, PDI Visayas Bureau*

Lim; 78

TAGBILARAN CITY—Mayor Pablo Lim of Valencia, Bohol died on March 12 after a weeklong hospitalization. He was 78. Lim was running for a third term under the Lakas-Christian Muslim Democrats. He was the patriarch of a political clan that includes younger siblings Concepcion and Renato Lim, both members of the Bohol provincial board. *Chito A. Fuentes, PDI Visayas Bureau*

'Freak accident'

ILOILO CITY—The Department of Justice declared as a "freak accident" the 2002 shootout between the National Bureau of Investigation agents and Capiz businessman Dindo Salazar that killed Salazar and two others. This was the basis for the DOJ's decision to dismiss the kidnapping and robbery complaint filed by the NBI against the family of Salazar and the murder and attempted murder complaints filed by Salazar's family against NBI agents and physician Madeline Erada. The incident was a "simple collection of debt" that turned bloody, the DOJ said. *Nestor Burgos Jr., PDI Visayas Bureau*

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INQUIRER Southern Luzon

Editor **Jun Bandayrel**
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'Green lawyers' also rare species

By Delfin T. Mallari Jr.
Lucena City

THEIRS is an endangered profession whose extinction would also affect efforts to protect and preserve the country's environment and natural resources.

"Public interest environmental lawyering is now getting rare among law practitioners in the country. It's now an endangered human species," lamented lawyer Asis Perez, area director of the Tanggol Kalikasan-Southern Luzon, a private environmental legal defense center based in Lucena City.

During the First Philippine Public Interest Environmental Law Conference at a resort in Tiaong, Quezon, last week, only around 40 environmental lawyers from across the country participated, he said. Of the number, only 15 are males.

Perez, a 1992 graduate of the Ateneo de Manila University who first worked with the Haribon Foundation, said around 20 law students also attended. "At least," he said, "we're assured that we're not getting extinct in the near future."

The youngest lawyer in the staff of the Tanggol Kalikasan belongs to the 1999 law graduates, he said.

He attributed the shortage of "green lawyers" to the big disparity in pay between conventional legal practitioners and his group. "The rate is not really competitive. If private and government law offices can offer 100 percent as starting rate, environmental lawyering could only offer half of it as initial rate," he said.

"And the fact that we have to scour for our own fund to keep our project moving," Perez added.

He said they secured the group's funding from local and foreign sources.

New phenomenon

Environmental lawyering is a recent phenomenon. It was borne out of development plans and policies that have often destroyed the environment.

Clients are often impoverished communities, such as those of indigenous peoples who are threatened by displacement with the entry of private firms inside government-declared protected areas, and farmers out to lose their fields because of questionable development projects of the government.

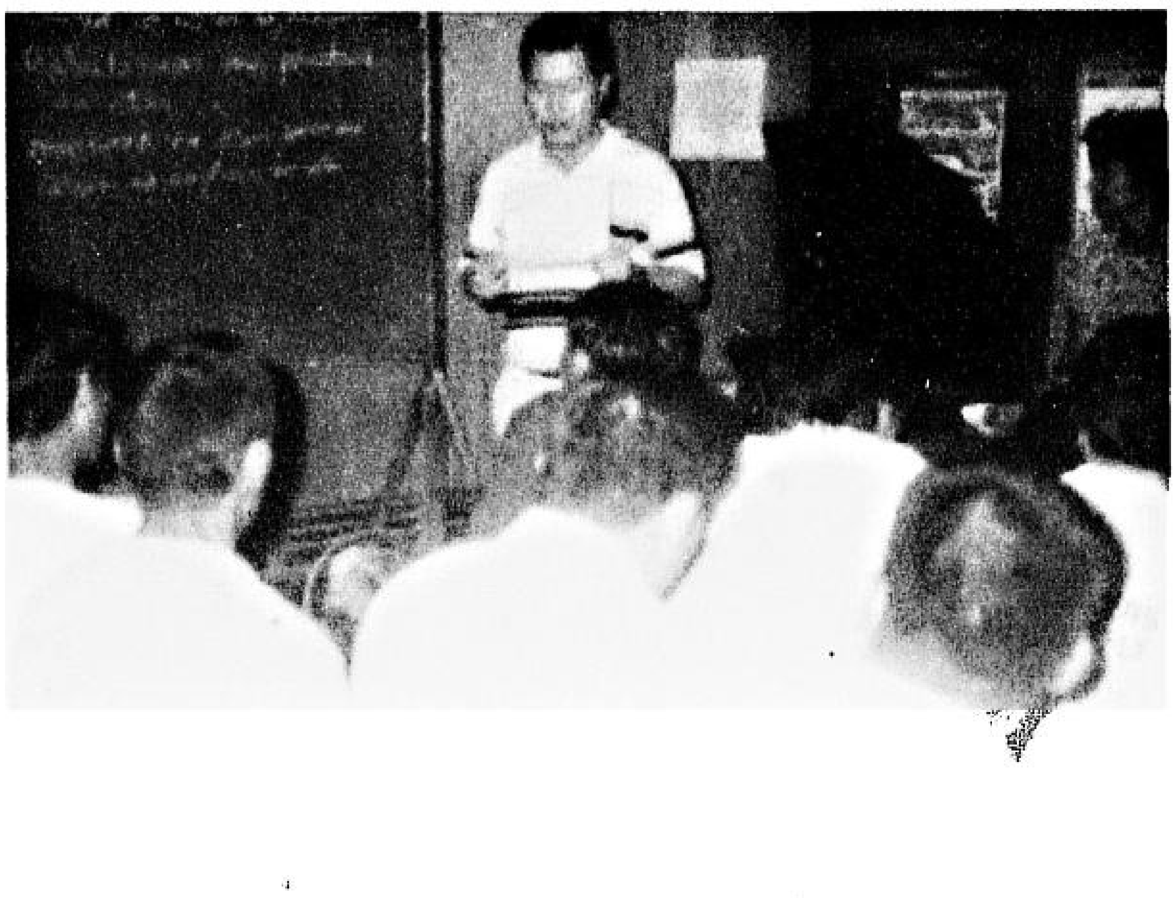
Perez said "green lawyers" could also be found in the Environmental Legal Assistance Center, Paglilingkod Batas Pangkapatiran Foundation, Panlipi and Legal Rights and Natural Resources Center, which attended the conference.

Environmental lawyers are not only confined to the legal aspects of the field, he said. They must also have practical knowledge on constituency building, organizing, mass action and mobilization that could endanger themselves, he said.

"Most often, our presence is needed in no man's land or in remote risky areas," Perez said. "This is one of the main reasons [for] the scarcity of our kind."

Despite the inherent hardship and danger in the profession, Perez was still profuse with tales of warm display of gratitude from the beneficiaries of their work.

"The lack of financial reward is being complemented by sincere expression of appreciation from our clients. It is either through fresh fruits, fish, sumptuous meals, beautiful flowers from the wild or just plain sincere handshake of thanks," he said.



LAWYER Asis Perez discusses the charges filed against the fisherfolk of Infanta, Quezon, in their struggle to regain possession of the mangrove areas turned into illegal fishponds by an influential person. DELFIN MALLARI JR.

Coach leads victorious Mindoro swimmers

By Madonna T. Virola
Calapan City

OUT of nowhere, the Oriental Mindoro Swimming Team (OMST) has been bagging medals.

The joke was that when they arrived at a competition venue, they were told "the Mangyans are early!"

But in a regional swimming competition held from Feb. 20 to March 6 in Calapan City, the local team, which had 17 out of its 32 members coming from the OMST, won the overall championship.

Puerto Princesa City was second and the OMST was third in the Mimaropa (Mindoro-Marinduque-Romblon-Palawan) Regional Meet.

Interestingly, the Oriental Mindoro team's only member is an OMST swimmer, who was excluded from the city team only because he is from Naujan town.

The triumph was expected. Many Mindoreños have become aware of this sport through other victories that the OMST has brought to the province. Some streamers have been hung in the city, congratulating the members after every win.

What made the feat possible is the OMST's 29-year-old coach, Randy Maulion or Coach Bady.

What the team had gone through was not easy, Coach Bady said. The children were disparaged for their abilities, but now, they have proven their worth, he said.

Birth

The coach, who has a bachelor's degree in Education, major in Physical Education, started with the "Learn to Swim" summer program for children in 1993. Out of about 25 enrollees, only three members have remained—Ma. Gabrielle "Marielle" Infantado, Edzen Faye Dinglasan and Edson Dinglasan.

"There are many responsibilities in this sport, like bringing the child to and from the swimming pool," he said. They have experienced defeat, learned their lessons, picked up and never lost their heart. Today, they continue to make a name for themselves."

The OMST was still called the Anoa Mindorensis Water Buffalo in the mid-1990s when it first won during the Southern Tagalog Amateur Swimming Association (Stasa) competitions. At that time, a swimmer in the team could bring home as many as seven medals.

Today, none of the members and even Coach Bady himself could tell how many medals they have won. They have simply stopped counting.

Formally organized in 2002, the OMST now has 18 competing members and 20 for the pre-competitive level (ages 6-16).

Coach Bady noted that after only two years, his team qualified for the 27th South East Asian Age Group Swimming held last year in San Pablo City. Ten countries participated in the meet.

The OMST won overall in the South East Asian Age Group (ages 11 and 12). Two of its members, Infantado and Edzen Dinglasan, both students at the Leido Memorial National High School, became part of the national team as juniors or second-liners.

Making name

Coach Bady never thought that he would be able to produce swimming champions. He was awarded the Gawad Tanglaw for youth leadership in sports by the city government last year.

Since 1993, he has been involved in the Palarong Pambansa as a swimmer and, later, as a coach. He was only a finalist though. "It was difficult to compete without a coach who would have given me the scientific training," he said.

He said he learned from experience, through observation and from other coaches' apprenticeship training. He has been an instructor of the Southern Tagalog Regional Athletic Association since 1993, and an organizer and instructor of Milo Best for three years.

Coach Bady was also the speaker in the regional accreditation for this year's Mimaropa Meet, where some 15 teachers from the Department of Education participated.

The major success factor for sport is the bonding among parents and assistance from the provincial and city governments, he said.

"A fighting heart and discipline of eight to nine hours' sleep among the swimmers are important, too," he stressed.

Food should be complete with more carbohydrates, he added.

Record

Infantado holds the Philippine record for 50 meters in the butterfly stroke. She was also an outstanding athlete during the Palarong Pambansa held in Naga City in 2002. She started swimming at 8 years old when her dad saw her talent in swimming.

She now appears in a Milo commercial, which started airing on Feb. 29, where she is featured as the child counterpart of Christine Jacob, a gold medalist in the 1983 Southeast Asian Games.

Dinglasan held the Philippine record in the 200m breast stroke in 2002 for the 11-12 age group.

"I was doing nothing one summer so I asked my parents to enroll me in swimming, then I have come to love it!" she said. "I give my best so as not to waste the support for my expenses, especially on food."

The Big A

Joining swimming competitions can be expensive. For every event in the regional competition, for example, an entry fee of P40 is charged for a swimmer aged 6-10 years old.

"Everybody chips in," Coach Bady said, adding that they didn't just solicit in order to avoid being embroiled in political controversies.

While nervousness stills persist during competitions, what matters most is the "Big A" or attitude, he said.

Exercises comprise the routine daily, except Mondays. When a big competition like a national meet is near, trainings are held mornings and afternoons, with two hours per session.

"A good disciplinarian and strict," Queency Geneta said of Coach Bady.

The mentor himself continues to update himself. He attended the International Olympics Solidarity Technical Course sponsored by the Philippine-American Swimming Association, a branch of the Philippine Sports Commission, late last year.

Sustaining OMST

Coach Bady would have spent time making money in Manila but he said he was committed to the team members.

Infantado came to him only when she was 5 years old and Dinglasan, when she was only 6.

Asked how he was able to make champions out of the children, he said, "there should be talent, and it's the coach who can only spot this. It's hard to tell but you can sense it through the movements of the child," he said.

Other factors are training and stress control.

As a coach, he would make sure that the time spent by the children in training does not go to waste.

While he and his team continue to earn respect and admiration, he does not want his only child to be a swimmer, so that the boy will not be compared to him or meet high expectations. "If my son would like to be a swimmer, I want him to be trained by others," Coach Bady said.

His wish is that more children join the swimming sport. At his young age, he said he was already contented with his achievements. "Here is where my personality has been developed."

For the children, he wants to see them win in international competitions.

COACH Bady with Marielle Infantado, now a Milo commercial model, and Edzer Dinglasan after a regular afternoon training. CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

YOUNG hopefuls in swimming pose for a souvenir shot during their training. (From left) First row: Nikki Roxas, Denise Angeli Tiquia, Ma. Danielle Infantado, Mara Estrella Goco, Karla Mara Nicole Tan; second row: Edjen Faye Dinglasan, Ma. Gabrielle Infantado, Florinelle Roxas, Leah Vanessa Galicia; last row: Leo Yves Galicia, Marx Tan, Julius Kevin Ciceron, Edson King Dinglasan, Joseph Gamboa, Renzo Manzo, Marene Abrahm Abas, Nicko Roxas.

Bets must pass Agta 'turongko' for votes

By Delfin T. Mallari Jr.
Infanta, Quezon

FOR THE Agta natives who dwell in the Sierra Madre mountain ranges in north Quezon, choosing the right candidates for government posts should pass through the strict scrutiny of the age-old "*turongko*" tradition.

Under the "*turongko*" system, all tribal leaders assemble and thoroughly discuss the capabilities of potential leaders of the community.

"No one here is spared. It's an age-old tradition that our tribe continues to observe," explained Ramsey Estuveza, one of the leaders of the Adhikain ng mga Grupong Taong Katutubo na Nagtatanggol sa Lupaing Ninuno (Agta).

"We also apply the process to all election candidates, be they local or national," he added.

The Agta leader reasoned out that his tribe was not contented with simply relying on information about the candidates that are disseminated by media.

Self-serving

"Although, we also consider them as information inputs, it would not serve the purpose of fully knowing the candidates. Most often, they're only self-serving or personal attacks in the form of mudslinging," Estuveza said.

He said they gathered information on the candidates by attending political meetings in the town centers.

"We take note of important aspects about the candidates, which we share during the *turongko*," Estuveza said.

At least 22 Agta communities are found in General Nakar town and four in Real town on the slopes of the Sierra Madre. Some members can also be found in at least seven native communities in the island towns of Burdeos and Polilio.

Enticement

Estuveza revealed how politicians used to entice them with wine, noodles and canned foods in exchange for their votes. Some gave them money just to deliver all the Agta votes.

"Without any strings attached, it is easy to accept the goods but not the money. If we accept the money, there is no more reason for us to complain about our plight and the shortcomings of the government officials," Catalino Rutaquio, another Agta leader, explained.

"But if the money is intended to help fund some of our projects, perhaps we can accept the offer after the elections," he added.

'Hidden agenda'

But Estuveza lamented that even if they wanted the tribe to vote as a bloc, it could not be done because of the "hidden agenda" of some leaders.

"We can no longer hide the fact that some of us are just using the tribe in exchange for their self-serving interests. It's the result of the long years of divide-and-rule tactics that have been employed against us by our oppressors," he said.

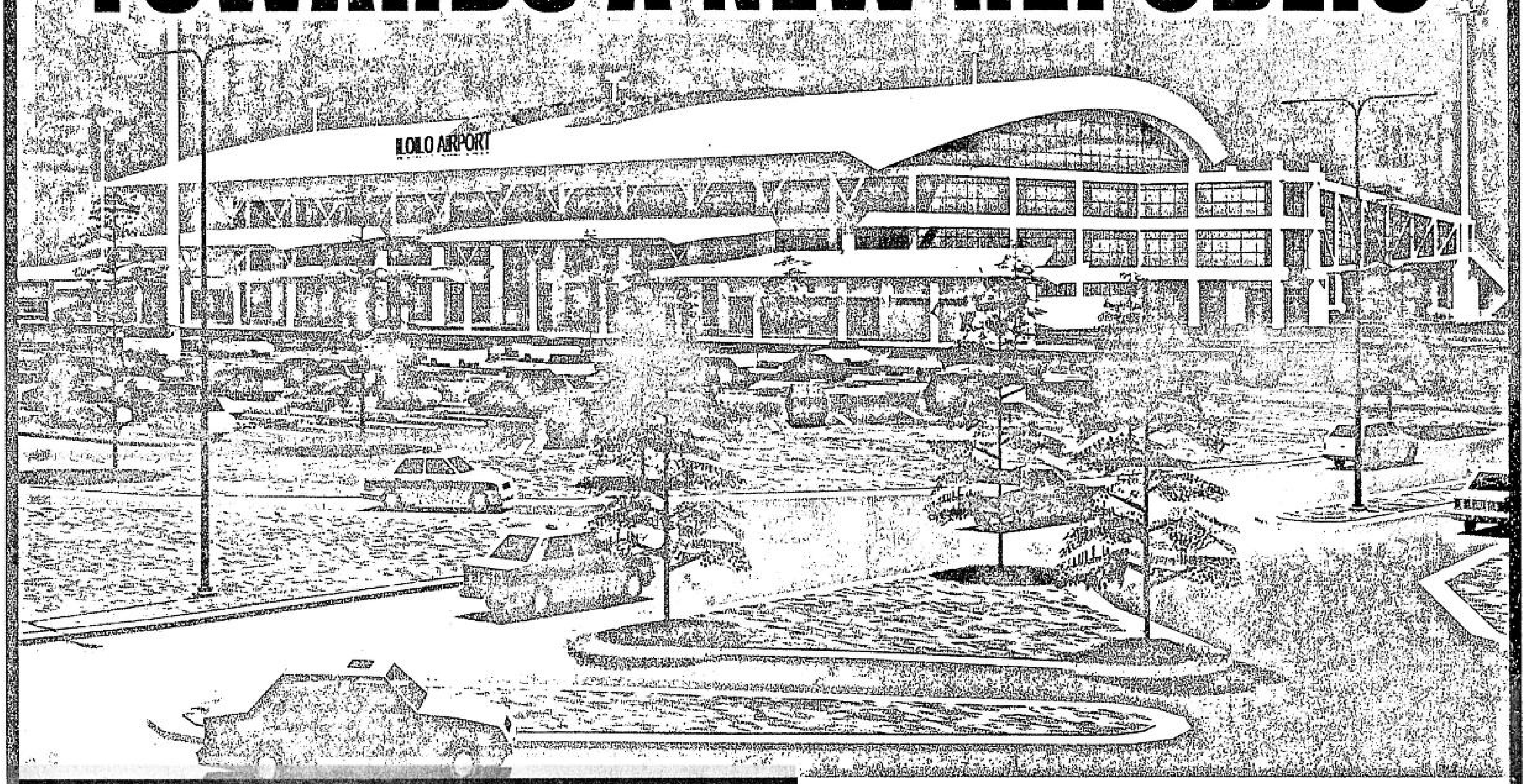
Earlier, the tribal leader declared that the Agta people would like to meet all the presidential candidates in order to personally secure their commitment to fully implement the ancestral domain law once they were elected.

Estuveza expressed hope that the Church and well-meaning government officials would help them in their request.

Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION & COMMUNICATIONS

THE NEW ILOILO AIRPORT

BREAKING GROUND TOWARDS A NEW REPUBLIC



USHERS IN ECONOMIC AND TOURISM PROGRESS IN WESTERN VISAYAS, REGION VI AND THE ENTIRE PHILIPPINES

A PHILIPPINE-JAPAN JOINT PROJECT WITH FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FROM JAPAN BANK FOR INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

THE PROJECT IS PART OF THE NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM OF PRESIDENT GLORIA-MACAPAGAL-ARROYO

"The construction of the New Iloilo International Airport is another milestone in our unceasing and relentless efforts to build a strong Republic. It will usher in faster commercial, agricultural and industrial progress in the Western Visayas and indeed throughout the entire Philippines as it links up with other modern transportation hubs and infrastructures in our country."

– ***President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo***

CEREMONIAL S CIVIL WORKS C

SIGNING OF THE NEW ILOILO AIRPORT CONTRACT. DOTC Secretary Leandro R. Mendoza (seated, third from left) and General Manager Int'l. Div. TAISEI Corp. Mr. Junichi Kagitomi, (seated, first from left) signed last March 15 the contract for the construction of the New Iloilo Airport in ceremonies held at the DOTC head office in Mandaluyong City. Senate President Franklin M. Drilon (2nd from left), who played a key role in pushing through the project, witnessed the signing. Other witnesses were (from left, standing) Osamu Murata, Chief representative of the Japan Bank for International Cooperation, Iloilo Rep. Augusto Syjuco Jr., Iloilo Gov. Neil Tupas, Presidential Assistant for Western Visayas Rene Villa, DOTC Assistant Secretary Robert Castañares and Iloilo Rep. Arthur Defensor (seated, 4th from left).

"The rise of a first-rate airport in Western Visayas that is compliant with international standards is crucial to the development of the region and of our country as a whole. This will boost our transportation services, making the Philippines and the Visayan region more accessible to the rest of the world, and thus attracting more investments and tourism."

– ***Franklin M. Drilon***
Senate President

"The development of Iloilo airport is part of the DOTC strategic direction to push President Gloria's national development agenda. To be built in conformity with international standards and with state-of-the-art facilities, it will directly serve the present and future air transport needs of the provinces of Aklan, Antique, Capiz, Guimaras, Iloilo and Negros Occidental."

– ***Leandro R.Mendoza***
DOTC Secretary

THE NEW AIRPORT WILL RISE IN A 188-HECTARE COMPLEX IN THE MUNICIPALITIES OF STA. BARBARA AND CABANATUAN, ILOILO PROVINCE, ONLY 19 KILOMETERS FROM ILOILO CITY.

CEREMONIAL SIGNING OF CIVIL WORKS CONTRACT WAS HELD LAST MARCH 15 AT THE DOTC HEADOFFICE IN MANDALUYONG CITY BETWEEN DOTC OFFICIALS AND TAISEI-SHIMIZU JV, CONTRACTOR.

LOAN AMOUNT	**: P 5.259 BILLION**
GOP COUNTERPART	**: P 0.928 BILLION**
TOTAL PROJECT COST	**: P 6.187 BILLION**
PROJECT DURATION	**: 42 MONTHS**

BATANGAS STATE UNIVERSITY: Despite ban on campaigning in schools, Ms Macapagal delivers her commencement addresses in three universities in Batangas, telling graduates she will wipe out unemployment if elected and pointing out that voting for her rival who has no experience could foul up the economy.

PATRICK CASTILLO

CAMANAVA: Raul Roco goes a-courting in Malabon on Wednesday.

OFFICE OF SENATOR RAUL ROCO

DAET, CAMARINES NORTE: Sen. Ping Lacson and his signature hand signal is hailed by supporters.

JESS YUSON

BRO. EDDIE
PRESIDENT

BARASOAIN CHURCH, MALOLOS, BULACAN: Bro. Eddie Villanueva launches his "40 Days to Victory and National Renewal" campaign. With him are Dolphy Jr., his wife Dory, Kata Inocencio and Anthony Raquel.

High court dismisses Roa-Rasul petition

From page A1

stop releasing expenditures authorized by Ms Macapagal; and the Commission on Audit to stop passing on any disbursements she had ordered.

Associate Justices Reynato Puno, Consuelo Ynares-Santiago and Angelina Sandoval-Gutierrez wanted to require Romulo, Figueroa and the COA to comment on the petition but were outvoted. They said the petition should not be dismissed "except as against the President and the Vice President, as it raises constitutional issues that have to be properly addressed."

Justice Jose Vitug is on official leave.

Moving on

In Malacañang, Ms Macapagal's campaign spokesperson Michael Defensor said the high court's decision should discourage the opposition from filing more "harassment suits" against her.

"It's time to move on and focus on the issues and platform that our voters need to be enlightened on in order to make an intelligent choice on election day," he said.

Ms Macapagal's spokesperson Ignacio Bunye told dzRB radio that the President was optimistic that all the suits filed against her during the campaign would eventually be dismissed by the Comelec and the courts.

The Comelec will try to speed up the resolution of disqualification cases against Ms Macapagal, declared its chair, Benjamin Abalos.

"It follows that other cases which are similar to the case dismissed by the Supreme Court would also be dismissed," he said.

Asked if hearings would still be held, Abalos said this would not be necessary.

"We will just issue a resolution dismissing the case," he said, citing one that sought Ms Macapagal's disqualification on the grounds that she had broken her promise not to run.

"Can that be a ground for disqualification—that she changed her mind? I don't think so. Those kinds of cases do not need to have a hearing," Abalos said, adding that if the Comelec devoted more of its time to hearings, it would not be able to accomplish anything.

National issue

On the campaign trail in Roxas City, a dismayed Roa said she and Rasul had been "confident" of the merits of their petition.

"Among other things, we had hoped that it would propagate the right move and that it would interpret for us the spirit of the Constitution, which was the greater issue at hand, about a sitting President's governance versus campaigning," she said.

The actress-turned-senatorial-candidate told reporters that she and Rasul would consult with their lawyers on the next step to take.

"It's unfortunate that the case was dismissed, but I'm quite confident that the issue remains a national issue, that it remains in the national consciousness of taxpayers," she said.

In a statement sent to the INQUIRER, Rasul said she was "disappointed" with the tribunal's decision.

"The Supreme Court clearly avoided the issue," Rasul said. "We can't blame them. But we thank the three brave and patriotic justices who voted to hear our side. Sadly, they're too few."

She said the high court had "virtually given [Ms Macapagal] the license to use all government resources just to ensure" her election.

"This scares the hell out of us, not because we face a stronger opponent with a bigger and more organized machinery, but because we fear that it is the money of us 82 million Filipinos that she will be using to achieve her own dreams and illusions," Rasul said.

Roa expressed surprise that the Supreme Court immediately issued a decision on the suit filed on March 17. She said their lawyers had earlier been informed that the decision was expected only after the Holy Week.

She also said "unqualified" information had reached them to the effect that there had been a strong lobby for the justices to dismiss the petition.

TRO on GMA

The Supreme Court also denied Roa and Rasul's request for oral arguments to be set on their petition for a temporary restraining order on the President.

According to the high court, Ms Macapagal is not barred from seeking the presidency because she is not running for reelection "for she was not elected president before."

The 1987 Constitution prohibits an elected president from running for reelection. Those who succeed as president and have served for more than four years are also disqualified from reelection.

Ms Macapagal assumed the presidency in January 2001 after the Edsa II uprising that ousted then President Joseph Estrada. Thus, she is not covered by the ban on those who succeed as president because she has not served for more than four years, the Supreme Court said.

The court also said accusations that Ms Macapagal had misused government funds and resources for her campaign involved factual issues that it could not deliberate on.

"These allegations, if proven true, would constitute violations of the law. This court, however, is not the proper forum in which to pursue such charges," the tribunal said.

"It is the Comelec that has primary jurisdiction over alleged violations of election laws. Furthermore, factual issues are involved, necessitating a suit in a forum that is a trier of facts," it added.

In their petition, Roa and Rasul asked the high court to tell the Comelec to cancel Ms Macapagal's certificate of candidacy if she does not resign.

They said that while there was no prohibition on Ms Macapagal running for another term, there was a "clear injunction against remaining in office and campaigning at the same time, and using government resources to support her [election]."

They noted that instead of following the law, Ms Macapagal had used public funds and resources for her campaign, in violation of the Omnibus Elections Code and the Fair Elections Act.

Rasul and Roa said the government's expenditures for advertisements had ballooned to P93.3 million for the first quarter of the year, compared to only P15 million in the same period last year.

They said Ms Macapagal had in effect converted the executive branch of government into "one big political party geared toward ensuring her victory in the May elections."

"[Ms Macapagal] has shown no qualms about ensuring her victory at any cost to the nation," they said. "[She] has shown only a predisposition to anarchy and lawlessness by openly flaunting her violations of the very laws she is sworn to uphold and protect, and by taking undue advantage of her position just to satisfy her compulsion."

'An insult'

The petitioners said "any rational, reasonable and moderately knowledgeable person can readily pierce the thin veneer of pretense and note that the funds [Ms Macapagal spent] for governance are really for personal political campaign expenses."

They said it was "an insult to the intelligence of all Filipinos to assume that they would fall for this brazen and imprudent reasoning."

They added that while other presidential candidates had had to follow the Comelec's "very strict" election guidelines, the President had freely used government resources.

"How then does [she] report the expenses she incurs for, say, the government cars or aircraft she uses to travel to her campaign sorties? How does [she] classify [their] source? As contributions from government? Which then begs the question—Is the government authorized by law to make campaign contributions to a presidential candidate? Obviously not," they said.

"A campaign so tainted, even though successful, can never give birth to a morally ascendant presidency. The end never justifies the means. The candidate-president should resign," they added.

Feeling persecuted

But the President feels that she is being persecuted by her rivals through a barrage of disqualification suits just because she is doing her job.

"Since when was public service an electoral offense? I would rather go to jail than stop serving the people," she said in a statement.

She also said the suits had "shackled" her from going about her job: "The opposition wants me to stop delivering clean water ... building shelter for the people, ... constructing classrooms in the barangays and maintaining the roads. They should help me serve the people and not throw obstacles along the way."

But despite the "malicious trap" supposedly laid by her rivals, the President is willing to "forgive" them provided they enlighten the electorate on what they have in store for the country under their leadership.

She said she was "saddened" by the way the opposition was resorting to mudslinging and name-calling during the campaign.

"Let us keep the campaign at a high plane and show a common respect for civility and democracy," she said. ***With reports from Martin P. Marfil, Christine O. Avendaño and Gil Cabacungan Jr.***

Campaigning militants try gay beauty contests

From page A1

Francis Rian Graciano, spokesperson of the militant group in Davao Oriental, said the party leadership had noticed that nationalistic discourses did little more than make listeners bored during rallies.

So, Graciano told the INQUIRER, Bayan Muna decided to use a more entertaining approach in courting votes—more entertaining, in fact, than the song-and-dance routines in the usual rallies. It will hold gay beauty contests.

Naturally, this could spell a field day for their critics: "*Bakla muna bago bayan* (Gays before country)?"

"We just want to draw bigger crowds, since Filipinos like entertainment," Graciano said. "As a matter of fact, we (choose) entertainers to run this country."

Just for fun

He vowed that their beauty contests would not disgrace members of the third sex. "As a matter of fact, we fight for the rights of gay people," he said.

But unlike participants in the search for President Macapagal-Arroyo look-alikes being conducted by a group of administration supporters, the gay beauty contestants will not receive cash incentives.

Graciano explained: "They know it is just for fun, to ensure bigger audiences so that our party-list group will win in the May elections. They will be doing it for free."

Jim Montevilla, an openly gay physician in Mati town, said he hoped Bayan Muna would rethink its strategy. "There are so many other ways to win the people's support," Montevilla said.

Entertainment has become a staple in political rallies.

Comedian running

Comedian Norman Mitchell, who hails from Davao del Sur, said he completely understood the need to go all the way to woo audiences.

Personally, he said, he did not mind cracking jokes "with double meaning" as long as the people laugh ... and stay.

Mitchell is running for councilor in Parañaque City. He was in Kidapawan City last week for the proclamation rally of North Cotabato Gov. Emmanuel Piñol's Lihuk Cotabato party.

"The element of laughter is important during rallies," the comedian pointed out. "And 'clean' jokes don't elicit as much response. If they don't like the jokes, many people leave in the middle of the rally. That's the last thing candidates want to happen." ***Ferdinand O. Zuasola and Jeffrey M. Tupas, PDI Mindanao Bureau***

Jeepney fares cost more today

By Clarissa S. Batino

STARTING today, jeepney fares would cost 75 centavos more within the National Capital Region and 50 centavos more in the provinces.

This followed yesterday's order from the Land Transportation Regulatory and Franchising Board to cut to the first 4 kilometers the distance covered by the minimum fare of P4.

In the new fare matrix issued by the LTFRB yesterday, jeepney drivers are now allowed to collect an additional 63 centavos in excess of the first 4 kilometers within Metro Manila and nearby provinces, and an incremental 57 centavos in excess of the first 4 kms. in the provinces.

In end-2000, the LTFRB granted jeepney groups a 50-centavo fare increase but changed the minimum fare distance to the first 5 kms.

LTFRB Chair Maria Elena Bautista said that jeepney drivers were allowed to round off the adjustment "to the nearest multiple of 25" so they won't have a hard time with the fare change.

There are no more one centavo coins in circulation and even the five and 10 centavo coins are not as widely circulated as the 25 centavos.

Bautista told jeepney drivers to prepare enough 25-centavo coins and to give the correct fare change to the passengers.

The LTFRB also ordered jeepney drivers to display the new fare matrix in each public vehicle. Violators would pay a penalty of P200 for the first offense and P500 for the second offense. Third offense could warrant a suspension of the franchise.

"We repeat that this is not a fare hike but a fare adjustment emanating from a decision to bring back the benchmark of the minimum fare to the first 4 kms. instead of the first 5 kms.," added Bautista.

In the NCR, a 5-kilometer jeepney ride would now cost P4.75 and P4.50 in the provinces.

New fare matrix

km	Fare within NCR	Fare in provinces
1-4	P4.00	P4.00
5	P4.63 (P4.75)	P4.57 (P4.50)
6	P5.26 (P5.25)	P5.14 (P5.25)
7	P5.89 (P6.00)	P5.71 (P5.75)
8	P6.52 (P6.50)	P6.28 (P6.25)
9	P7.15 (P7.25)	P6.85 (P6.75)
10	P7.78 (P7.75)	P7.42 (P7.50)
11	P8.41 (P8.50)	
12	P9.04 (P9.00)	

Bomb center eyed in fight vs terrorism

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

THE NORTHERN Police District is setting up a Bomb Incident Center as part of the government's intensified anti-terrorism drive.

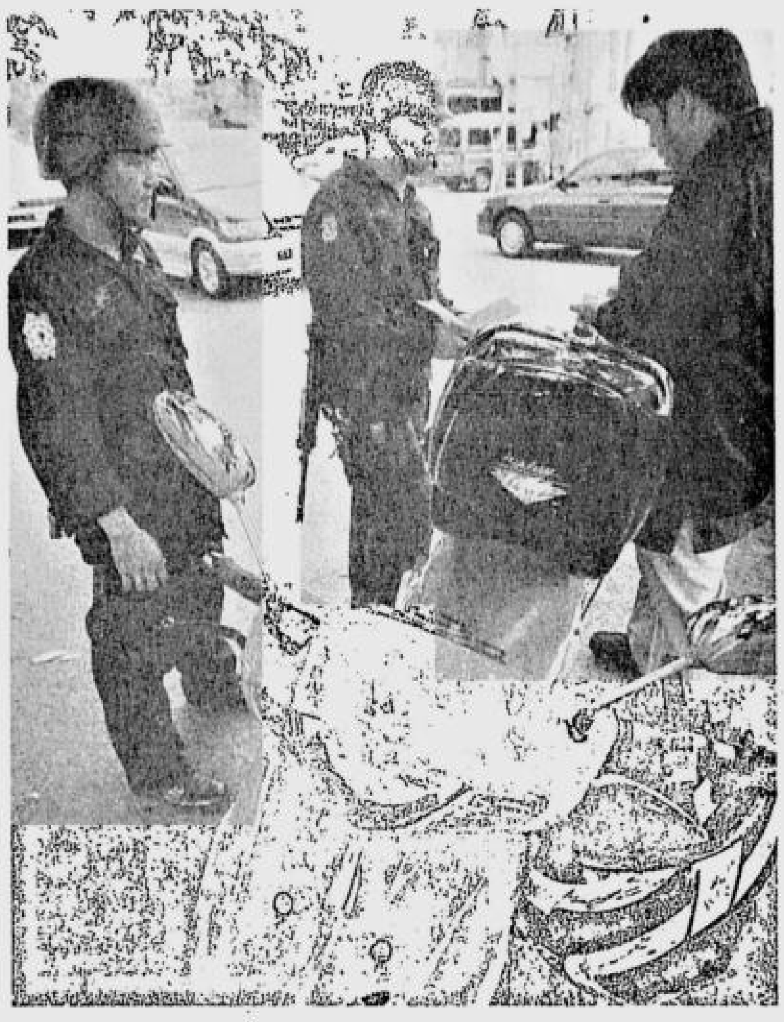
Director Marcelino Franco told the INQUIRER yesterday the center was aimed to prepare the police force in the renewed police drive against terrorism.

Bomb incident centers will also be set up in regional offices, other police districts, down to station units, he said.

The other day, President Macapagal-Arroyo announced that the government foiled an alleged Abu Sayyaf terror plot in the metropolis.

Four alleged Abu Sayyaf members, one of whom claimed credit for the Feb. 27 SuperFerry 14 fire, were arrested, while 36 kilos of explosives were confiscated.

The bomb incident center, composed of officials from different district departments, will be tasked to organize information campaigns, special training and drills in bomb incidents.



SECURITY CHECK

Anti-terrorist policemen check a motorist along a road in Quezon City Wednesday as part of an intensified anti-terrorist drive being waged in the metropolis. AFP

Metro poll hot spots reduced from 31 to 17

By Tina Santos

THE PEACE covenants signed by political parties and candidates seeking local elective posts have reduced the number of election areas of concern in Metro Manila from 31 to 17, according to a revalidation conducted by the National Capital Region Police Office (NCRPO).

NCRPO Director Ricardo de Leon said the revalidation was made after the campaign period for local posts kicked off on March 25.

"This can mainly be attributed to the peace pacts between warring political factions in areas tagged as hot spots to prevent bloodshed as the May 10 elections draw near," De Leon said.

The peace covenant was initiated by the Metro Manila chiefs of police and the Pastoral Parish Council for Responsible Voting (PPCRV), he added.

The areas of concern include Binondo, Del Pan, Parola, and Barangays Don Bosco and Balut in Manila; Barangay Maharlika and Lower Bicutan in Taguig; Barangays Malinta, Ugong and Canumay in Valenzuela; and Barangays Payatas, Damayang Lagi, Tandang Sora, Batasan Hills, Tatalon, Balara and UP Campus in Quezon City. *Tina Santos*

'Eco-Corps' in 6 Metro schools

By Volt Contreras

SIX METRO Manila universities will start implementing this month, a summer course that will immerse students in environmental issues.

The course is being offered as an option particularly for male students who don't wish to undergo the Reserved Officers Training Course, according to the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

The pilot schools for the two-month "Eco-Corps" are the University of Santo Tomas, Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Maynila, Philippine School for Business Administration, New Era University, Rizal Technological University and AMA Computer Learning Center in Roosevelt, Quezon City.

Conceptualized last year, Eco-Corps stands for Environment Conservation through Citizen's Organized Participation and Support.

The course accounts for six units and will require 108 class hours. It will be up to each school to set its own class schedules, the DENR said.

METROBRIEFS

Fall victim dies

THE COWBOY Grill employee on whom a suicide victim landed after jumping from the roof deck of a building in Manila on Tuesday morning died from spinal injuries sustained in the incident. Jimmy Villena, 28, an assistant manager of the Cowboy Grill in Malate, Manila, and a father of three, died of spinal shock at the Manila Doctor's Hospital at around 3:30 p.m. on Tuesday, said PO3 Paul Dennis Javier. He and a friend, 33-year-old Crispin Ombid, were rushed to the said hospital after 26-year-old Edwin Dexter Ong landed on them after he allegedly jumped from the 39th floor of the roof deck of the Robinson's Tower I. *Leila Salaverria*

6 drivers nabbed

SIX JEEPNEY drivers were arrested in Pasay City for allegedly preventing other drivers from plying their routes and blocking the main roads during Tuesday's transport strike, a report from the National Capital Region Police Office (NCRPO) said. Director Ricardo de Leon, National Capital Region Police Office chief, said his men chanced upon the suspects while forcing colleagues into joining the strike. *Tina Santos*

NBI 'agent' held

AN ALLEGED civilian agent of the National Bureau of Investigation was arrested for robbery, extortion and illegal detention in an entrapment operation that took place right across the bureau's office along Taft Avenue in Manila yesterday. Nabbed was Eden M. Asban, 28, who introduced himself as a civilian agent of the Anti-Human Trafficking Division, even though the NBI has already ceased deputizing civilian agents. Asban was arrested after receiving marked money from complainant Eliseo Tabucalde, police said. *Leila Salaverria*

Cops not patrolling tourist area

ON TARGET

Ramon Tulfo

NOW IT'S getting very clear: the terrorist Abu Sayyaf really "planted" a bomb on SuperFerry 14. The ship sunk and brought with it more than 100 passengers confirmed and still missing.

How did the bomb get past Coast Guard personnel manning the entrance to SuperFerry 14?

If there's an agency that should be held responsible for the SuperFerry 14 tragedy, it should be the Coast Guard.

* * *

The government won't admit this, and even the good Moros won't admit this. But the centuries-old bad blood between the Moros and the predominantly Christian population is the reason Muslim extremists are driven to kill as many Christians as they can.

Not that the Moros are entirely at fault. We Christian Filipinos are also to blame for exacerbating the Muslim-Christian enmity that started in the Crusades. After all, hatred for our Muslim brothers was foisted on us by the Spaniards. Remember the Moro-Moro stage plays during the Spanish era that depicted the Moros as savages?

Moro leaders are also to blame for the continuing strife between Christians and Muslims. They make majority of their fellow Moros in virtual bondage by making them perpetually ignorant. By making the least of their Muslim brethren ignorant or uneducated, Moro leaders are able to manipulate them.

* * *

The *imams* or Muslim priests should disabuse the minds of ignorant but fierce Moros about heavenly reward for killing Christians

The belief among ignorant Muslims is that when a Muslim kills many Christians during *jihad* or holy war, he goes straight to heaven on a white horse. And awaiting a *jihad* warrior in heaven are young virgins.

The Muslim-Christian conflict will never end unless wrong beliefs in both faiths are corrected.

* * *

The Muslim-Christian conflict is not confined to this country. Europe has its share of bad blood between Christians and Muslims.

The bombings in Madrid that killed about 200 people is an example. Spain got the ire of Muslim extremists for supporting the US in the Iraq war.

Since the country is also supporting the US, we should brace for attacks similar to the Madrid bombings.

Already, government security forces have foiled an attempt to bomb trains and malls in Metro Manila. The attacks would have been similar to what happened in Madrid. Four members of an Abu Sayyaf cell that would have undertaken the planned terrorism are in government custody.

Even with the busting of the Abu Sayyaf cell, the government can't afford to let its guard down. In fact, it's all the more reason for government security forces to be constantly alert.

* * *

Diana Rose Dawang, a nursing student, was walking home to her boarding house when a man grabbed her handbag. A working student, she had just finished her day at the Kentucky Fried Chicken branch on Ma. Orosa St.

When she resisted, the man stabbed her. She died a few hours later at the Manila Medical Center.

Dawang would still be alive today had policemen in uniform been patrolling the area.

Ermita and Malate districts are in the so-called tourist belt. Uniformed policemen should be crisscrossing the area to protect not only tourists but "locals," as well.

In Hong Kong, the most patrolled streets are those frequented by tourists. You see uniformed cops at every corner. In Manila, if you see cops in uniform they are sitting down at a corner when they should be walking.

I agree, there's a constant uniformed police presence at the Baywalk on Roxas boulevard in Manila at night, but it's only because a top Manila police official owns a restaurant in that area.

Otherwise, Manila policemen are not seen elsewhere.

* * *

Jimmy Villena, 29, assistant manager of a restaurant in Ermita, was urinating in a restaurant restroom when something landed on him. He died later in a hospital.

Another 29-year-old guy, Edwin Dexter Ong, decided to end his own life by jumping from the 39th floor of Robinson's Tower I along Padre Faura St.

Ong's falling body fell on the roof of the restaurant and landed on Villena.

That is what you call fate. Villena's time was up.

ROLLBACK
OIL PRICES NOW!
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CALTEX
DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY
BACK

CROSS TO BEAR

Members of the Kilusan Laban sa Mataas na Presyo ng Gas (Kalampag) hold a rally in front of the Shell main office in Makati City Wednesday to demand a rollback in the prices of gasoline and liquefied petroleum gas (LPG). RUDY ESPERAS

2 major ad firms join protest vs 'Kinse' ad

RELIGIOUS and feminist groups have gained new allies with two major advertising firms joining the protest against Napoleon Brandy's controversial "Kinse Años" ad.

According to Cristina Palabay, women's group Gabriela secretary general, the Association of Accredited Advertising Agencies (4As) and the Outdoor Advertising Association of the Philippines (OAAP) have already expressed support to the campaign against the brandy ad, which several groups have found offensive.

"It is high time for the owners of Destileria Limtuaco to reconsider their strong position of ignoring the public outcry against their ad. With the biggest associations of advertising agencies throwing their support against these ads, the firm should act now by pulling out their ads if they don't want to be isolated," Palabay said.

The women's group, together with different church groups, has also launched a signature drive in various communities, churches and schools. *Tina Santos*

Power outage delays flights

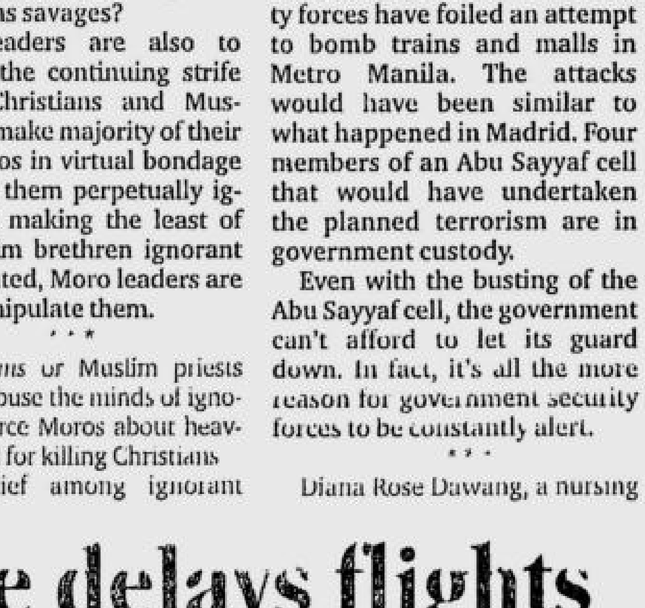
A FAULTY electrical circuit triggered a power outage at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport (Naia) yesterday, causing lengthy delays on domestic and international flights, airport officials said.

At least 15 domestic and international flights to and from Naia's Terminal 2 were affected by the outage starting at around 2 a.m. The terminal is used exclusively by Philippine Airlines.

Several PAL flights were delayed by one to two hours because of the outage.

Airport engineer Elpidio Mendoza said airport generators were providing backup electricity to the terminal, adding the repair job might be finished by today.

He ruled out sabotage as being behind the outage. AFP, AP



HUNDREDS of passengers queue at NAIA terminal 2 due to the power outage.

Coed's slay . . .

From page A20

WPD to exert extra effort to catch Dawang's killer.

He also said that there is no need for extra deployment of police forces along General Luna Street because detectives are already roaming the area and looking for Dawang's killer.

On Tuesday evening, the WPD Homicide Unit also invited for questioning 17 men, mostly pedicab drivers, who were hanging out along Gen. Luna Street that night to give leads or important information that could lead to the resolution of the young girl's killing.

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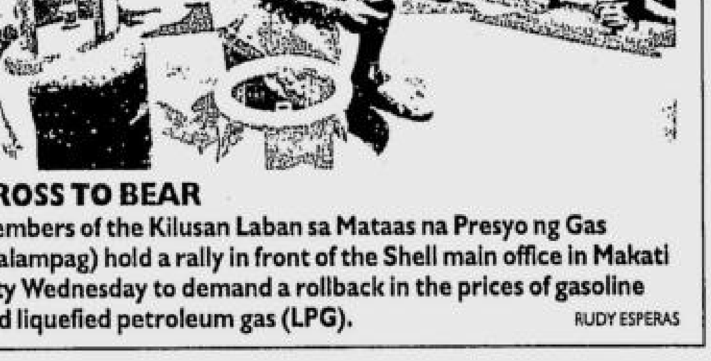

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SUERTRES
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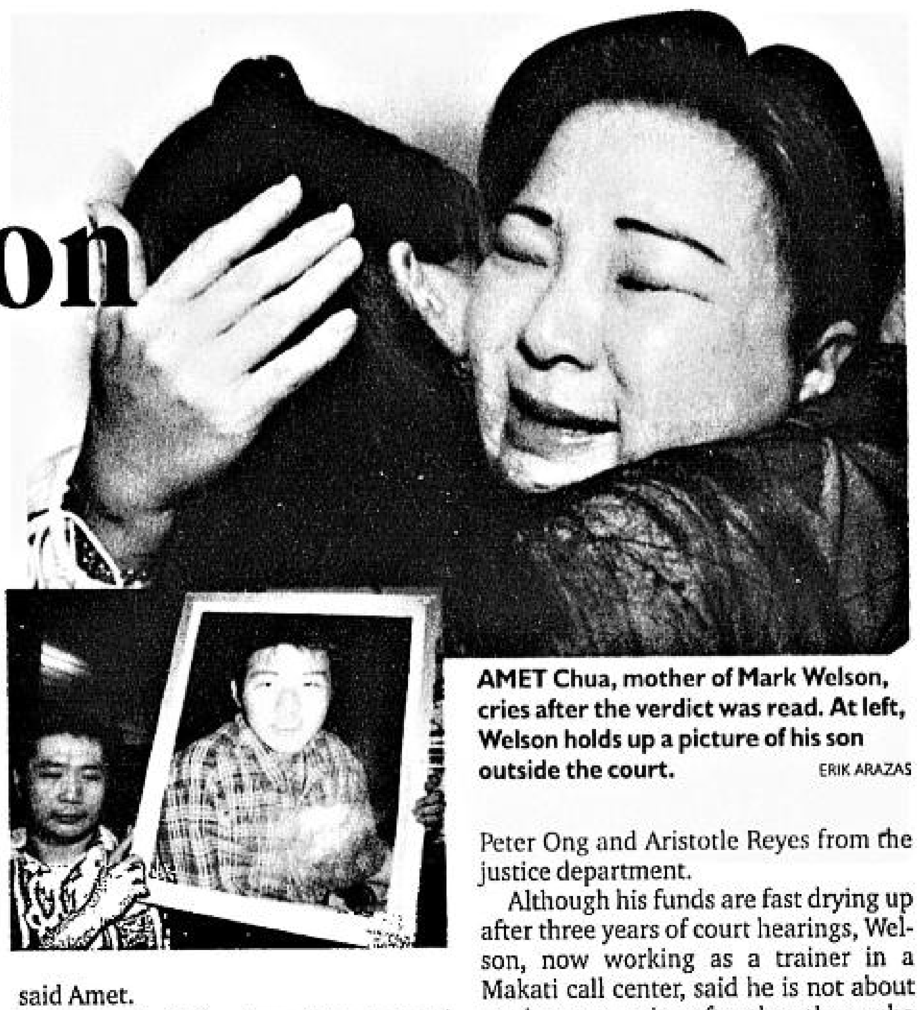
MEGALOTTO 6/45
1 6 18 37 44 45

Finally, justice for Mark Welson

By Tarra Quismundo

AFTER three years, Welson and Amet Chua got the news they had waited for the longest time.

Days after they marked their son's third death anniversary, the Chuas wept copiously yesterday when they heard the guilty verdict read for Arnulfo Aparri, one of the accused in the killing of their son Mark Welson, by the Manila Regional Trial Court. Aparri now faces a death sentence.



AMET Chua, mother of Mark Welson, cries after the verdict was read. At left, Welson holds up a picture of his son outside the court. ERIK ARAZAS

A student at the University of Sto. Tomas, Mark had exposed alleged bribery and corruption activities in the UST Reserved Officers Training Corps. After the expose, his body was found floating in the Pasig River.

Witness Franco Suelto had identified Aparri as one of the men who wrapped Mark's body at the UST Department of Military and Service Training Office on the night of his murder on March 15, 2001.

Mark's body was found three days later. An autopsy revealed that he had died of suffocation.

Aparri surrendered to the National Bureau of Investigation on Feb. 9, 2002. Three others charged with Mark's murder, Eduardo Tabrilla, Paul Joseph Tan and Michael Von Rainard Manangbao, are nowhere to be found.

A warrant for their arrest has been out since the case was filed in 2001. The court yesterday ordered that the case be archived until they are caught.

Aparri was given the death penalty as the court found that his surrender could not make up for the "treachery" committed in the crime. He was also ordered to pay Mark's heirs P50,000.

The court added that the accused "enjoyed and delighted" in Mark's slow death, in an act that involved "abuse of superior strength."

Mark was a 19-year-old mechanical engineering student and a sergeant major of the UST Reserved Officers Training Corps when he was killed.

"He would have graduated with us. Though we were happy on our graduation, we thought of Mark and what he would have contributed to the community," said Charol Chan, a classmate.

Chan, who described Mark as a dedicated student, graduated with their other batchmates last Saturday.

"He would have been an engineer," said Amet.

"I have healed a long time ago and I've forgiven my son's killers, but the pursuit of justice remains," said Welson, who brought a framed photograph of his son to the court yesterday.

While he and Amet had been leading separate lives even before Mark's death, the two pursued their son's case together with Mark's older sister, Charmaine, and with the help of state prosecutors Peter Ong and Aristotle Reyes from the justice department.

Although his funds are fast drying up after three years of court hearings, Welson, now working as a trainer in a Makati call center, said he is not about to give up running after the others who have not been caught.

Manangbao, the son of former Cabanatuan City police chief Ruel Manangba, reportedly flew to the United States sometime in October 2001, he said. Tan, a nephew of a former vice mayor of Lamitan, Basilan, is "probably somewhere in Lamitan," according to the court, while Tabrilla is in hiding "probably in Metro Manila."

Tanong ng Bayan
INQ TV
Ngayong Alas-10 Ng Gabi

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ABC

Coed's slay isolated case, says cop chief

By Leila B. Salaverria

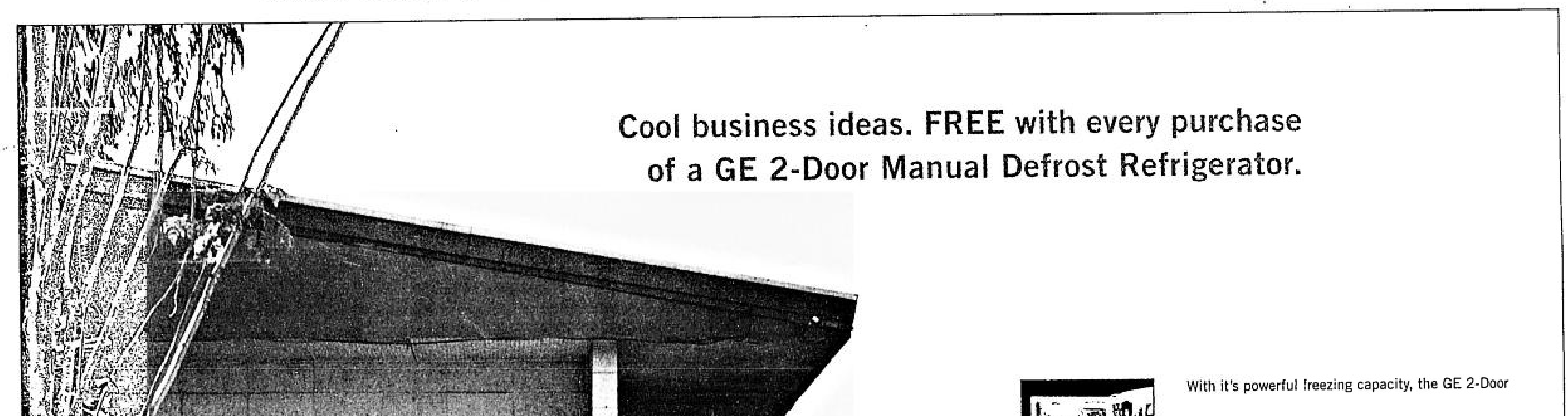
THE KILLING of 19-year-old nursing student Diana Rose Dawang near the police headquarters on Monday night was just an isolated incident, a top police official said yesterday.

Western Police District chief Supt. Pedro Bulaong also debunked speculation that street crimes in Manila are on the rise.

Bulaong said the fate that befell Dawang, who was stabbed to death in a botched robbery along Gen. Luna Street in Ermita, was not a regular occurrence along the said street.

But Bulaong said he had directed the Criminal Investigation and Detection Unit of the

COED's/A19



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SPORTS
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Editor **Teddyvic S. Melendres**
Assistant Editor **Edwin M. Villanueva**

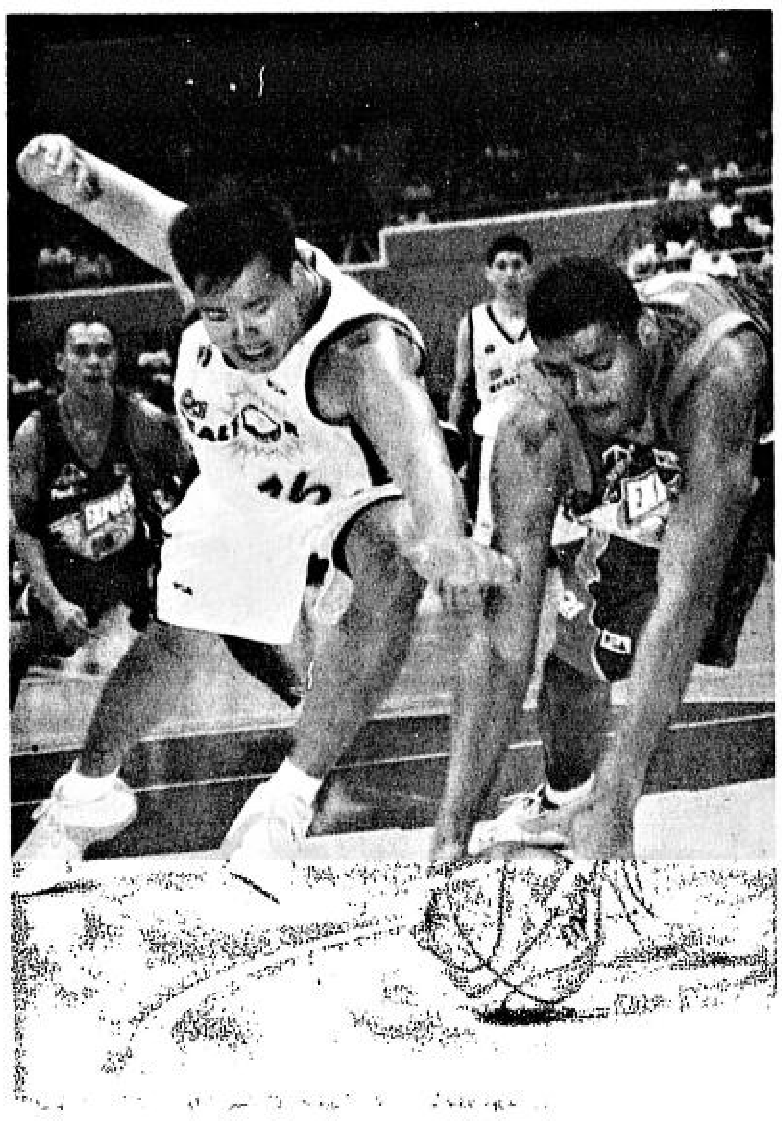
SPORTS TV

Compiled by L. Manguiat

BASKETBALL: NBA - Nets vs Wizards; 8 a.m. (r-10 p.m.); Solar Sports; Kings vs Spurs; 8 p.m.; IBC 13 - New Jersey tries to keep its dominance of the Atlantic Division when it goes up against cellar dweller Washington while it's a clash of the titans when Sacramento collides with San Antonio.

Vintage NBA - Dave Debusschere; 11 a.m.; Solar Sports - Learn more about the career of this former New York great.

NBA Greatest Games - Lakers vs Suns, Game 3, 1984 Western Finals; 12 noon; Solar Sports - Los Angeles and Phoenix clash in this all-important match.



STA. Lucia's Dennis Espino(left) and FedEx's Omanzie Rodriguez dispute ball possession in last night's game won by the Express. AUGUST DELA CRUZ

BEERMEN UNBEATEN

FedEx wallops SLR

By June Navarro

GAME TODAY *(New Tacloban City Astrodome)*
5:30 p.m.—Talk 'N Text vs Purefoods

FEDEX gave Derrick Brown all the shooting room he needed but clamped down on his Sta. Lucia teammates as the Express eluded the cellar with a methodical 97-86 win over the Realtors last night in the Gran Matador PBA Fiesta Conference at the Araneta Coliseum.

The Express squandered a 20-point spread but escaped with their second victory in seven games as the Bert Lina-owned ballclub outrebounded its opponent for the first time in the season to complement its tough defense.

Brown got off with a game-high 44 points, but the Express beat the Realtors off the glass, 60-52, and FedEx import Mike Maddox unleashed another explosive game by scoring 34 points and grabbing 15 rebounds in an almost no-relief stint on the floor.

"We concentrated on defense and rebounding during our last practice and I'm glad it paid off," said FedEx coach Boni Garcia, who also got an awesome showing from pivotman Omanzie Rodriguez.

Rodriguez held his own against Sta. Lucia twin towers Marlou Aquino and Dennis Espino and erased his measly scoring record of six points by banging in 12 points after going perfect (6 of 6 attempts) in the field.

In the second game, Danny Seigle scored 13 of his 17 points in the final half as San Miguel Beer repulsed Alaska, 89-81, to stretch its unbeaten record to eight games. The Aces fell to their third loss in eight games.

Art Long had 19 points and 15 rebounds to back up Seigle's effort while Dondon Hontiveros, Danny Ildefonso and Nic Belasco combined for 38 points for the Beermen.

Galen Young had a splendid night, pumping in 19 points and hauling down 17 rebounds in 47 minutes but suddenly lost steam in the last quarter at the height of the Beermen's comeback.

Asked if the Beermen are on their way to a sweep, San Miguel Beer coach Jong Uichico played down their chances and stressed that the team will take it one game at a time in their next 10 assignments.

Meanwhile, PBA Commissioner Noli Eala increased Art Long's penalty to P20,000 after Sta. Lucia Realty officials confirmed that the 6-foot-8 San Miguel Beer import indeed attacked Marlou Aquino on the way to the dugout at halftime during the recent SMB-Sta. Lucia game last Sunday

The scores:

First game:

FEDEX 97—Maddox 34, Rodriguez 12, Yap 10, De Ocampo 9, Ferriols 9, Meneses 9, Ritualo 8, Arboleda 4, Billones 2, Gonzales 0, Pingris 0, Bernardo 0, Ejercito 0.

STA. LUCIA 86—Brown 44, Omolon 14, Espino 9, Aquino 8, Cuan 4, Gonzales 3, Francisco 2, Mendoza 2, Santos 0, Victolero 0, Adriano 0, Locsin 0, Ong 0.

Quarters: 24-17, 51-40, 73-68, 97-86.

Second game:

SAN MIGUEL 89—Long 19, Seigle 17, Hontiveros 16, Ildefonso 12, Belasco 10, Racela 7, Pena 5, Singson 3.

ALASKA 81—Young 19, Allado 16, Peek 15, Cortez 10, Thoss 8, Cablay 7, Duat 6, Wilson 0, Feihl 0.

Quarters: 19-20, 39-44, 60-60, 89-81.

PBL TODAY
(Makati Coliseum)
2 p.m.— Viva-FEU vs Blu Star
4 p.m. —Welcoat vs Toyota Otis

JUNIOR TOUR

Superals pull off sweep; Tabuena survives playoff

THE SUPERAL siblings—Wolen, Crystal Faith and Princess—completed their family triple-kill, as expected, all in runaway fashion and Miguel Tabuena provided the drama by winning boys' Class D via a sudden-death playoff yesterday in the opening leg of the 2004 Philippine Junior Golf Tour at the Canlubang north and Riviera executive courses.

Tabuena rode on a birdie on the last hole of regulation for a two-shot swing that got him into a playoff with Bino dela Paz. After exchanging pars on the first two extra holes, Tabuena claimed the thrilling win when he two-putted for par and Dela Paz missed a tying five-footer.

A huge gallery of jungolfers and parents followed as both 10-year-olds went through the grinding pressure of a playoff.

Blowouts punctuated most of the other divisions with Wolen Superal (74-223) topping boys' Class C (11-12 years) by 25 strokes, his elder sister Crystal Faith (80-250) topping girls' Class B (13-14) by 16 and their youngest sister Princess (76-226) ruling Class E (7-8) by 22.

Dottie Ardina, the former world jungolf champion, routed the field in girls' Class D by 28 strokes with her closing even-par 72 for a 225 aggregate.

Korean Kim Chang-hoi emerged as boys' Class A champ when two-day leader Gino Bunyi collapsed on the final day. Kim shot 72-219, beating Tonton Asistio, who submitted the tournament's second sub-par round of 71 for 221, by two. Bunyi soared to an 80 and settled for third at 225.

TABUENA: Thrilling win.

The next leg of the Tour, supported by Samsung, DHL Philippines, Philippine Airlines and ICTSI bossman Ricky Razon, will be played at Camp John Hay in Baguio on April 12-15 with the qualifying for the Callaway-sponsored San Diego Junior World championships set to follow at Sherwood Hills on April 19-22.

The other winners were Matet Salivio in girls' Class A, Junro Mamaril in boys' Class B, Cyna Rodriguez in girls' Class C, JR Gonzales in boys' Class E and Justin Dy and Janella Buen in the 6 years-and-under division.

The scores:

Class A Boys - 219 Kim Chang Hoi 75-72-72, 221 Tonton Asistio 75-75-71, 225 Gino Bunyi 74-71-80,; Girls-219 Matet Salivio 83-82-83, 263 Linnel de Villa 89-90-84

Class B Boys 232 Junro Mamaril 77-80-75, 235 Mikee Camitoc 79-79-77, 238 Migo Ochoa 81-81-76 ; Girls - 250 Crystal Superal 86-84-80, 266 Bambi dela Paz

SUPERALS/ A22

Biggest-ever Southwoods Invt'l begins

THE CHASE for the top two awards and division honors is shaping up to be as hot as the blazing summer heat as the 2004 Southwoods Invitational—the member-guest golf tournament of Manila Southwoods—starts today at the club's Legends and Masters courses.

The record field of 288 teams of 576 players will be disputing the biggest bonanza of prizes in the history of the 36-hole tourney.

When the tourney which has Globe Platinum as main sponsor ends this Sunday, April 4, four players will be going home with any of the following prizes: a brand-new Mitsubishi Lancer GLS-Automatic, an eight-day, seven-night Mexican-Riviera Cruise for two via Northwest Airlines/Royal Carribean, a Wilson golf set and a free eye laser surgery from American Eye Center and a Bangkok holiday via Thai Airways plus a Lucerne watch.

These prizes will initially be at stake as hole-in-one prizes at the par-3s of the two courses. But if no one shoots an ace on any of the designated holes, these prizes will be included in the package of raffle items worth more than P2 million.

The other sponsors are TMShipping, Saud Beach Resort, Evergreen, Miramar Tuna Belly, Britesmile, Nestle, Vein Care Clinic, Pink Patio Resort Boracay, Figaro, Hotshots, Camp John

BIGGEST/ A23

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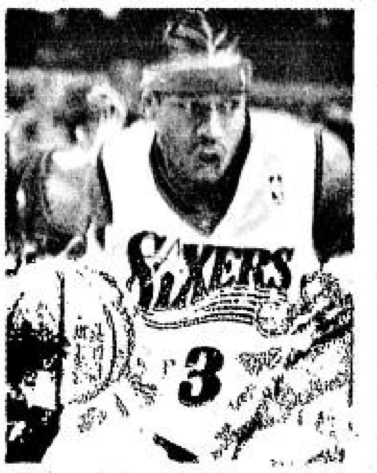
Bum knee sidelines Iverson for rest of season



IVERSON

PHILADELPHIA—Allen Iverson is out for the rest of the regular season.

The Philadelphia 76ers announced Tuesday their All-Star guard will miss the final eight games because of persistent pain in his right knee, the same injury that kept him out of 13 of the last 19 games.

An MRI showed a small lesion under Iverson's knee cap, but there was no meniscal or ligament damage.

"It was better now to sit him down so it doesn't linger a lot longer," said team president Billy King. "It's probably best to get it where his knee is 100 percent. It's not a situation where Allen doesn't want to play. His knee just keeps swelling up."

The injury comes with the Sixers in danger of being eliminated from the playoff race. Philadelphia is 10th in the Eastern Conference, but beat Golden State, 95-71, Tuesday night.

King said Iverson's health would be reevaluated if the Sixers make the playoffs.

"Worst case scenario, surgery would be an option if it does not calm down," King said. "Rest and rehabilitation hopefully will do it."

The injury was diagnosed Monday by New York Giants team doctor Russell Warren, who Iverson consulted for a second opinion.

King said the swelling affected Iverson's movement and quickness.

Messages left for Iverson and his agent, Leon Rose, were not immediately returned. Iverson was at the arena before the game, though he was not on the bench against the Warriors.

Iverson has now missed 27 games this season, the most in his eight-year career, and the Sixers are 13-14 without him. The underachieving Sixers have been ravaged by injuries this season, enough to cost rookie coach Randy Ayers his job after only 52 games. Interim coach Chris Ford has battled with Iverson since taking over.

Earlier this month, Iverson refused to come off the bench in Toronto after he was told he was not going to start.

King said those clashes had nothing to do with Tuesday's decision.

"He wants to play. What he doesn't want is people saying he doesn't want to play because of Chris Ford," King said. **AP**

SPORTSWATCH

Dart Mall Tour goes to SM Sucat

AFTER THE well-attended first two editions at SM Marilao and SM Lucena where exciting prizes were given away, the Sportshouse "Dart Mall Tour" will be held at SM Sucat in Parañaque on April 3 and 4. "We want to bring more people into sports and more sports into people's lives. We thought of the darts project in addition to the basketball fiesta and the upcoming badminton project," said Mars Chua, Sportshouse president. Co-sponsored by SM, McDonald's, Lino's Food and Entertainment, Largeformatix and Picture City, the "Dart Mall Tour" will also tour SM Fairview on April 16, 17 and 18 and SM Sta. Mesa on April 23, 24 and 25. The Sportshouse-organized darts event, supported by Robson Cues, Volt and Ultramax , is part of Summer Events@Supermalls treat for the shoppers.

Tanauan hosts Little League series

YOUTH baseball and softball will once again be showcased when the 2004 Little League Philippines Series unfolds from April 12 to 22 in Tanauan City, Batangas. Considered as the longest-running and prestigious sports program in the country, the tournament has attracted a total of 80 teams—58 in boys' baseball and 22 in girls' softball—that will vie for honors and get the chance to represent the country in their respective World Series in the United States. "We are honored to be the host of this prestigious championship. We aim to make this event a memorable one for all of the participants, even as they sample our city's hospitality," said Tanauan Mayor Alfredo Corona. He said the city has prepared a huge lot in Barangay Pagaspas where 10 playing diamonds have been built through the help of the RFM Group of Companies. Lawyer Jolly Gomez, Little League assistant district administrator, said stricter screening criteria will be enforced to prevent age-cheating and name-switching.

NCA derby championships today

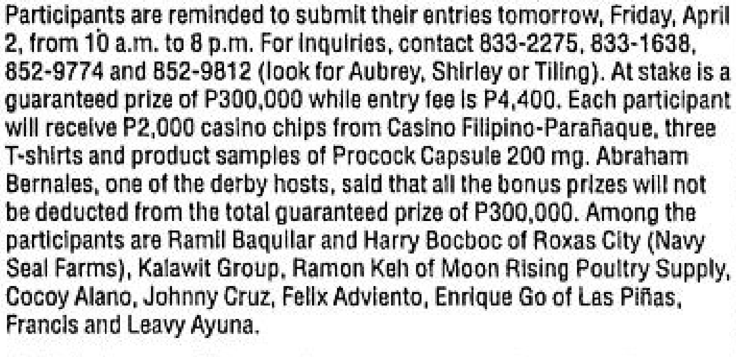
THE CHAMPIONSHIP round of National Cockers Association (NCA) 7-Cock Derby gets going today at the air-conditioned Araneta Coliseum beginning at 5 p.m. A total of 56 fights are scheduled. Today's hosts are NCA members Tony Tan, Tony Marfori and Pepito Ngo. A jampacked crowd witnessed the elimination round last Tuesday. From a field of 38 entries only four managed to score three wins each: Winslet Paniqui (Dicky Lim an Max Roxas), Binangonan Balbina (former ambassador Danding Cojuangco and Gov. Ito Ynares), Lucky Rin Firefly Binangonan (Rene Medina and Ric de Guzman) and Swing JV Rosario (Jun Villar). Meanwhile, the next NCA derby is slated on April 13 and 15 with hotelier Biboy Enriquez and Ucap president Raymond Velayo as hosts. Interested parties may call 911-3101 and 911-2928 (look for Gloria Avena).

Roligon meet attracts huge field

THE "CASH Premyo 3-Cock Derby" of Roligon Mega Cockpit will start at 1 p.m. on Saturday, April 3. More than 80 entries are joning the meet. Participants are reminded to submit their entries tomorrow, Friday, April 2, from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. For inquiries, contact 833-2275, 833-1638, 852-9774 and 852-9812 (look for Aubrey, Shirley or Tiling). At stake is a guaranteed prize of P300,000 while entry fee is P4,400. Each participant will receive P2,000 casino chips from Casino Filipino-Parañaque, three T-shirts and product samples of Procock Capsule 200 mg. Abraham Bernales, one of the derby hosts, said that all the bonus prizes will not be deducted from the total guaranteed prize of P300,000. Among the participants are Ramil Baquilar and Harry Bocboc of Roxas City (Navy Seal Farms), Kalawit Group, Ramon Keh of Moon Rising Poultry Supply, Cocoy Alano, Johnny Cruz, Felix Adviento, Enrique Go of Las Piñas, Francis and Leavy Ayuna.

QC inter-village tourney on Saturday

SPRING Cooking Oil basketball team's assistant coach, Lemuel Ortiz, has been named tournament director of Quezon City's biggest league which unwraps at 1 p.m. on Saturday, April 3, at the Tivoli Royale Country Club gym in Batasan Hills. Seventy-five teams from 35 subdivisions will see action in the inter-village cagefest organized by the Alliance of Quezon City Homeowners' Association. The cagefest highlights the Sagip Kabataan at Kapaligiran project of AQCHAI. Drug prevention seminars and basketball clinics will also be held, according to Ortiz, who is helping AQCHAI youth and sports committee chair Danilo Mendoza.


BOWLING PARTNER. Brunswick International Limited director of sales David Chetow shakes hands with new business partner Philippine Bowling Equipment Sale and Services Inc. president Edmundo Lim after the recent contract signing making PBESSI as the official and exclusive distributor of Brunswick Bowling products and services in the Philippines. Also shown are Philippine Bowling Congress president Steve Hontiveros, PBESSI officer Jesus Avecilla, Aireen Robles, Pepe Sian, Allan Kua and Allan Chan.

DRIVING BETS. A new set of Filipino drivers joined the Team Tec Pilipinas this year for the Subic International Raceway championships on March 28. Enzo Pastor (left), the 1st Asian Formula champion, will act as head coach. Also shown during the recent signing of contract are (from left) Class C lady driver Dahlia Guerrero, Emmanuel Hoque and Mark de Sales, all vying for the SVI and BRC production series titles for 2004 and Tom Pastor, team owner of Team Tec Pilipinas.

LA Lakers pick up 9th win in row

76ers halt Warriors' run

LOS ANGELES—Even a woeful start can't keep the streaking Los Angeles Lakers down these days.

Kobe Bryant scored 23 points and Gary Payton added 20 Tuesday night as the Lakers routed the short-handed New Orleans Hornets, 107-88, despite falling behind by 12 points in the opening four minutes.

The win was the ninth straight for the Lakers (51-23), who moved within 1 1/2 games of the Western Conference-leading Sacramento Kings.

The Lakers, who have an NBA-best 20-4 record since the All-Star break, have eight games remaining including five at home. The Kings have nine left including six on the road. The teams meet in Sacramento on April 11.

New Orleans (37-37) lost for the fifth time in six games, dropping to .500 for the first time this season and into a tie with Milwaukee for fourth place in the Eastern Conference.

The Hornets played without injured stars Baron Davis and Jamal Mashburn.

Shaquille O'Neal had 15 points and nine rebounds; Karl Malone added 11 points, eight rebounds and nine assists despite sitting out the fourth quarter, and Devean George and Brian Cook scored 10 points each.

The Lakers finished their interconference schedule with a 25-5 record against Eastern Conference teams, including 15-0 at home—just the second time they've ever accomplished that feat.

Darrell Armstrong and P.J. Brown scored 13 points each and Jamaal Magloire had 12 points and 14 rebounds for the Hornets.

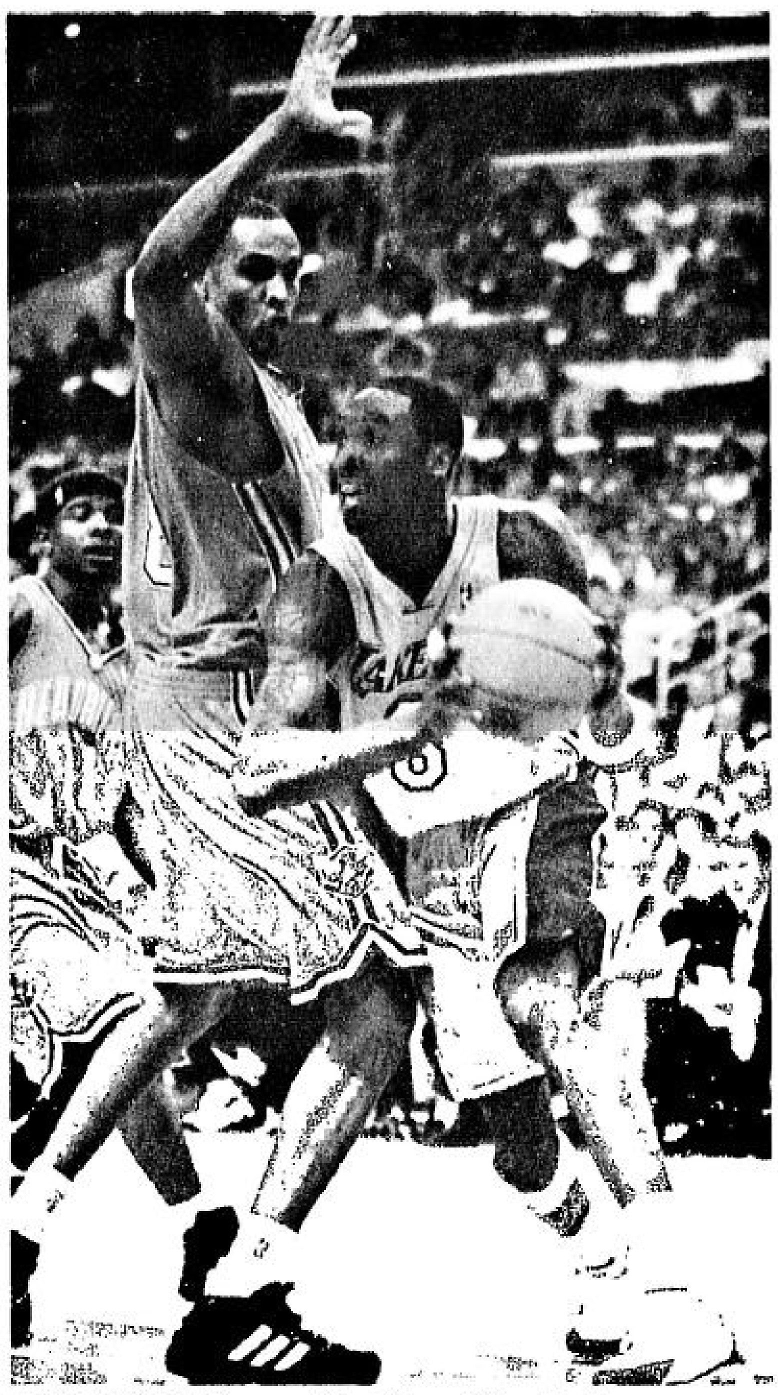
In Philadelphia, Samuel Dalembert had 18 points and 13 rebounds, and Kenny Thomas had 13 points and 14 rebounds to lead the 76ers to a 95-71 win over Golden State, snapping the Warriors' seven-game winning streak.

The Sixers on Tuesday again played without Allen Iverson, who will miss the rest of the season because of persistent pain in his right knee. An MRI showed a small lesion under Iverson's knee cap, but there was no meniscal or ligament damage.

Iverson was not on the bench as the Sixers (32-43) kept their fading playoff hopes alive and improved to 13-14 without the NBA's second-leading scorer.

Dalembert and Aaron McKie led the way during a decisive 30-6 run in the third quarter.

Complete results: Philadelphia 95, Golden State 71; Milwaukee 95, Indiana 86; Dallas 126, Cleveland 109; Denver 124, Seattle 119; LA Lakers 107, New Orleans 88. **AP**


BRYANT (right) drives past New Orleans' Steve Smith. REUTERS

Blue Devils underdog

DURHAM, N.C.—Duke is hardly used to being an underdog.

After all, the Blue Devils have won three national championships and reached 10 Final Fours under coach Mike Krzyzewski.

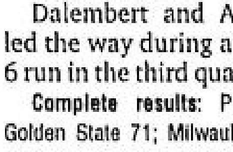
But Connecticut has beaten all of its NCAA tournament foes by at least 16 points and is favored to defeat Duke in Saturday's national semifinals in San Antonio.

It will be a rematch of the 1999 NCAA final, which UConn won for its first national championship in men's basketball. **AP**

ATHENS OLYMPICS

Boxing, taekwondo main medal prospects—Dayrit

By Marc Anthony Reyes


GEISLER

PAYLA

WE CAN win medals in Athens.

But Philippine Olympic Committee president Celso Dayrit refused to identify yesterday the color of medals or the sport that will produce them in the Olympic Games in Athens this August.

The country has yet to nail down an Olympic gold with light flyweight boxer Mansueto "Onyok" Velasco blowing only the second chance by a Filipino at an Olympic victory by losing to Bulgaria's Daniel Boujilov in 1996 in Atlanta, Georgia, USA.

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Boxing will be a chief prospect for medals again along with taekwondo, according to Dayrit. Both sports have three qualifiers so far with boxing hoping to secure more berths in the last qualifying tournament in Pakistan.

Already assured of Olympic stints are Violito Payla, Cris Camat and Romeo Brin in boxing, Tshomlee Go, Donald Geisler and Ma. Antoinette Rivero in taekwondo, Miguel Mendoza, Miguel Molina and Carlo Piccio in swimming, Lerma Bulauitan and Eduardo Buenavista in athletics and Jasmin Figueroa in archery.

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Duval skips Masters

JACKSONVILLE, Florida—Former British Open winner David Duval is withdrawing from the Masters, saying on Tuesday he needs more time to work on his game and enjoy his new family.

"I'm feeling good after taking all this time off, and I'm feeling healthy," Duval said from his home in Denver. "But I feel like I need to give it more time and make sure I'm healed." **AP**

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Bum knee sidelines Iverson for rest of season

IVERSON

PHILADELPHIA—Allen Iverson is out for the rest of the regular season.

The Philadelphia 76ers announced Tuesday their All-Star guard will miss the final eight games because of persistent pain in his right knee, the same injury that kept him out of 13 of the last 19 games.

An MRI showed a small lesion under Iverson's knee cap, but there was no meniscal or ligament damage.

"It was better now to sit him down so it doesn't linger a lot longer," said team president Billy King. "It's probably best to get it where his knee is 100 percent. It's not a situation where Allen doesn't want to play. His knee just keeps swelling up."

The injury comes with the Sixers in danger of being eliminated from the playoff race. Philadelphia is 10th in the Eastern Conference, but beat Golden State, 95-71, Tuesday night.

King said Iverson's health would be reevaluated if the Sixers make the playoffs.

"Worst case scenario, surgery would be an option if it does not calm down," King said. "Rest and rehabilitation hopefully will do it."

The injury was diagnosed Monday by New York Giants team doctor Russell Warren, who Iverson consulted for a second opinion.

King said the swelling affected Iverson's movement and quickness.

Messages left for Iverson and his agent, Leon Rose, were not immediately returned. Iverson was at the arena before the game, though he was not on the bench against the Warriors.

Iverson has now missed 27 games this season, the most in his eight-year career, and the Sixers are 13-14 without him. The underachieving Sixers have been ravaged by injuries this season, enough to cost rookie coach Randy Ayers his job after only 52 games. Interim coach Chris Ford has battled with Iverson since taking over.

Earlier this month, Iverson refused to come off the bench in Toronto after he was told he was not going to start.

King said those clashes had nothing to do with Tuesday's decision.

"He wants to play. What he doesn't want is people saying he doesn't want to play because of Chris Ford," King said. *AP*

SPORTSWATCH

Dart Mall Tour goes to SM Sucat

AFTER THE well-attended first two editions at SM Marilao and SM Lucena where exciting prizes were given away, the Sportshouse "Dart Mall Tour" will be held at SM Sucat in Parañaque on April 3 and 4. "We want to bring more people into sports and more sports into people's lives. We thought of the darts project in addition to the basketball fiesta and the upcoming badminton project," said Mars Chua, Sportshouse president. Co-sponsored by SM, McDonald's, Lino's Food and Entertainment, Largeformatix and Picture City, the "Dart Mall Tour" will also tour SM Fairview on April 16, 17 and 18 and SM Sta. Mesa on April 23, 24 and 25. The Sportshouse-organized darts event, supported by Robson Cues, Voit and Ultramax , is part of Summer Events@Supermalls treat for the shoppers.

Tanauan hosts Little League series

YOUTH baseball and softball will once again be showcased when the 2004 Little League Philippines Series unfolds from April 12 to 22 in Tanauan City, Batangas. Considered as the longest-running and prestigious sports program in the country, the tournament has attracted a total of 80 teams—58 in boys' baseball and 22 in girls' softball—that will vie for honors and get the chance to represent the country in their respective World Series in the United States. "We are honored to be the host of this prestigious championship. We aim to make this event a memorable one for all of the participants, even as they sample our city's hospitality," said Tanauan Mayor Alfredo Corona. He said the city has prepared a huge lot in Barangay Pagaspas where 10 playing diamonds have been built through the help of the RFM Group of Companies. Lawyer Jolly Gomez, Little League assistant district administrator, said stricter screening criteria will be enforced to prevent age-cheating and name-switching.

NCA derby championships today

THE CHAMPIONSHIP round of National Cockers Association (NCA) 7-Cock Derby gets going today at the air-conditioned Araneta Coliseum beginning at 5 p.m. A total of 56 fights are scheduled. Today's hosts are NCA members Tony Tan, Tony Marfori and Pepito Ngo. A jampacked crowd witnessed the elimination round last Tuesday. From a field of 38 entries only four managed to score three wins each: Winslet Paniqui (Dicky Lim an Max Roxas), Binangonan Balbina (former ambassador Danding Cojuangco and Gov. Ito Ynares), Lucky Rin Firefly Binangonan (Rene Medina and Ric de Guzman) and Swing JV Rosario (Jun Villar). Meanwhile, the next NCA derby is slated on April 13 and 15 with hotelier Biboy Enriquez and Ucap president Raymond Velayo as hosts. Interested parties may call 911-3101 and 911-2928 (look for Gloria Avena).

Roligon meet attracts huge field

THE "CASH Premyo 3-Cock Derby" of Roligon Mega Cockpit will start at 1 p.m. on Saturday, April 3. More than 80 entries are joning the meet. Participants are reminded to submit their entries tomorrow, Friday, April 2, from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. For inquiries, contact 833-2275, 833-1638, 852-9774 and 852-9812 (look for Aubrey, Shirley or Tiling). At stake is a guaranteed prize of P300,000 while entry fee is P4,400. Each participant will receive P2,000 casino chips from Casino Filipino-Parañaque, three T-shirts and product samples of Procock Capsule 200 mg. Abraham Bernales, one of the derby hosts, said that all the bonus prizes will not be deducted from the total guaranteed prize of P300,000. Among the participants are Ramil Baquilar and Harry Bocboc of Roxas City (Navy Seal Farms), Kalawit Group, Ramon Keh of Moon Rising Poultry Supply, Cocoy Alano, Johnny Cruz, Felix Adviento, Enrique Go of Las Piñas Francis and Leavy Ayuna.

QC inter-village tourney on Saturday

SPRING Cooking Oil basketball team's assistant coach, Lemuel Ortiz, has been named tournament director of Quezon City's biggest league which unwraps at 1 p.m. on Saturday, April 3, at the Tivoli Royale Country Club gym in Batasan Hills. Seventy-five teams from 35 subdivisions will see action in the inter-village cagefest organized by the Alliance of Quezon City Homeowners' Association The cagefest highlights the Sagip Kabataan at Kapaligiran project of AOCHAI. Drug prevention seminars and basketball clinics will also be held, according to Ortiz, who is helping AOCHAI youth and sports committee chair Danilo Mendoza

BOWLING PARTNER. Brunswick International Limited director of sales David Chetow shakes hands with new business partner Philippine Bowling Equipment Sale and Services Inc. president Edmundo Lim after the recent contract signing making PBESSI as the official and exclusive distributor of Brunswick Bowling products and services in the Philippines. Also shown are Philippine Bowling Congress president Steve Hontiveros, PBESSI officer Jesus Avecilla, Aireen Robles, Pepe Sian, Allan Kua and Allan Chan.

DRIVING BETS. A new set of Filipino drivers joined the Team Tec Pilipinas this year for the Subic International Raceway championships on March 28. Enzo Pastor (left), the 1st Asian Formula champion, will act as head coach. Also shown during the recent signing of contract are (from left) Class C lady driver Dahlia Guerrero, Emmanuel Hoque and Mark de Sales, all vying for the SVI and BRC production series titles for 2004 and Tom Pastor, team owner of Team Tec Pilipinas.

LA Lakers pick up 9th win in row

76ers halt Warriors' run

LOS ANGELES—Even a woeful start can't keep the streaking Los Angeles Lakers down these days.

Kobe Bryant scored 23 points and Gary Payton added 20 Tuesday night as the Lakers routed the short-handed New Orleans Hornets, 107-88, despite falling behind by 12 points in the opening four minutes.

The win was the ninth straight for the Lakers (51-23), who moved within 1 1/2 games of the Western Conference-leading Sacramento Kings.

The Lakers, who have an NBA-best 20-4 record since the All-Star break, have eight games remaining including five at home. The Kings have nine left including six on the road. The teams meet in Sacramento on April 11.

New Orleans (37-37) lost for the fifth time in six games, dropping to .500 for the first time this season and into a tie with Milwaukee for fourth place in the Eastern Conference.

The Hornets played without injured stars Baron Davis and Jamal Mashburn.

Shaquille O'Neal had 15 points and nine rebounds; Karl Malone added 11 points, eight rebounds and nine assists despite sitting out the fourth quarter, and Devean George and Brian Cook scored 10 points each.

The Lakers finished their interconference schedule with a 25-5 record against Eastern Conference teams, including 15-0 at home—just the second time they've ever accomplished that feat.

Darrell Armstrong and P.J. Brown scored 13 points each and Jamaal Magloire had 12 points and 14 rebounds for the Hornets.

In Philadelphia, Samuel Dalembert had 18 points and 13 rebounds, and Kenny Thomas had 13 points and 14 rebounds to lead the 76ers to a 95-71 win over Golden State, snapping the Warriors' seven-game winning streak.

The Sixers on Tuesday again played without Allen Iverson, who will miss the rest of the season because of persistent pain in his right knee. An MRI showed a small lesion under Iverson's knee cap, but there was no meniscal or ligament damage.

Iverson was not on the bench as the Sixers (32-43) kept their fading playoff hopes alive and improved to 13-14 without the NBA's second-leading scorer.

Dalembert and Aaron McKie led the way during a decisive 30-6 run in the third quarter.

Complete results Philadelphia 95, Golden State 71, Milwaukee 95, Indiana 86, Dallas 126, Cleveland 109; Denver 124, Seattle 119, LA Lakers 107 New Orleans 88 *AP*

BRYANT (right) drives past New Orleans' Steve Smith. REUTERS

Blue Devils underdog

DURHAM, N.C.—Duke is hardly used to being an underdog.

After all, the Blue Devils have won three national championships and reached 10 Final Fours under coach Mike Krzyzewski.

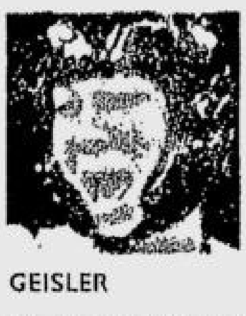
But Connecticut has beaten all of its NCAA tournament foes by at least 16 points and is favored to defeat Duke in Saturday's national semifinals in San Antonio.

It will be a rematch of the 1999 NCAA final, which UConn won for its first national championship in men's basketball. *AP*

ATHENS OLYMPICS

Boxing, taekwondo main medal prospects—Dayrit

By Marc Anthony Reyes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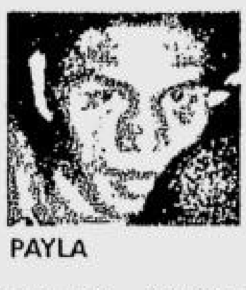
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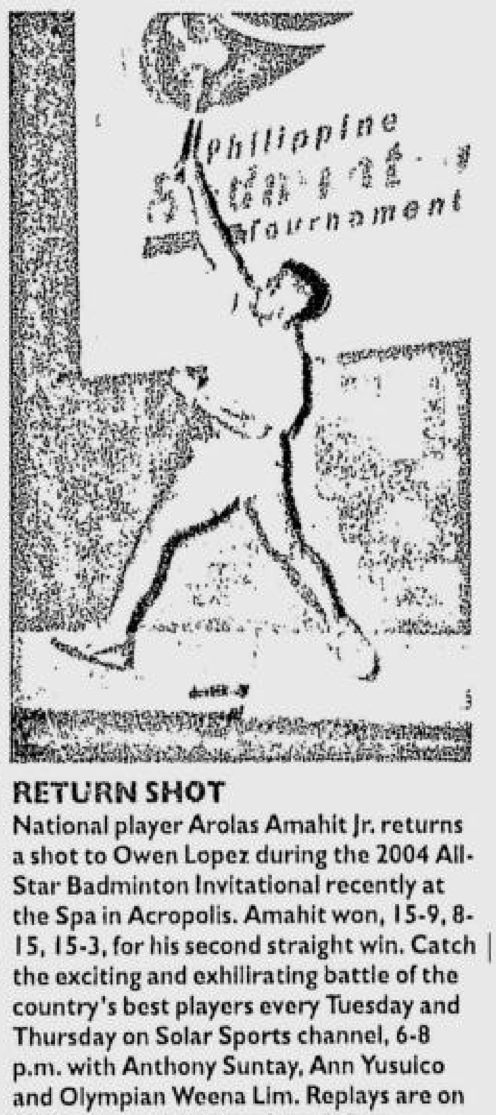

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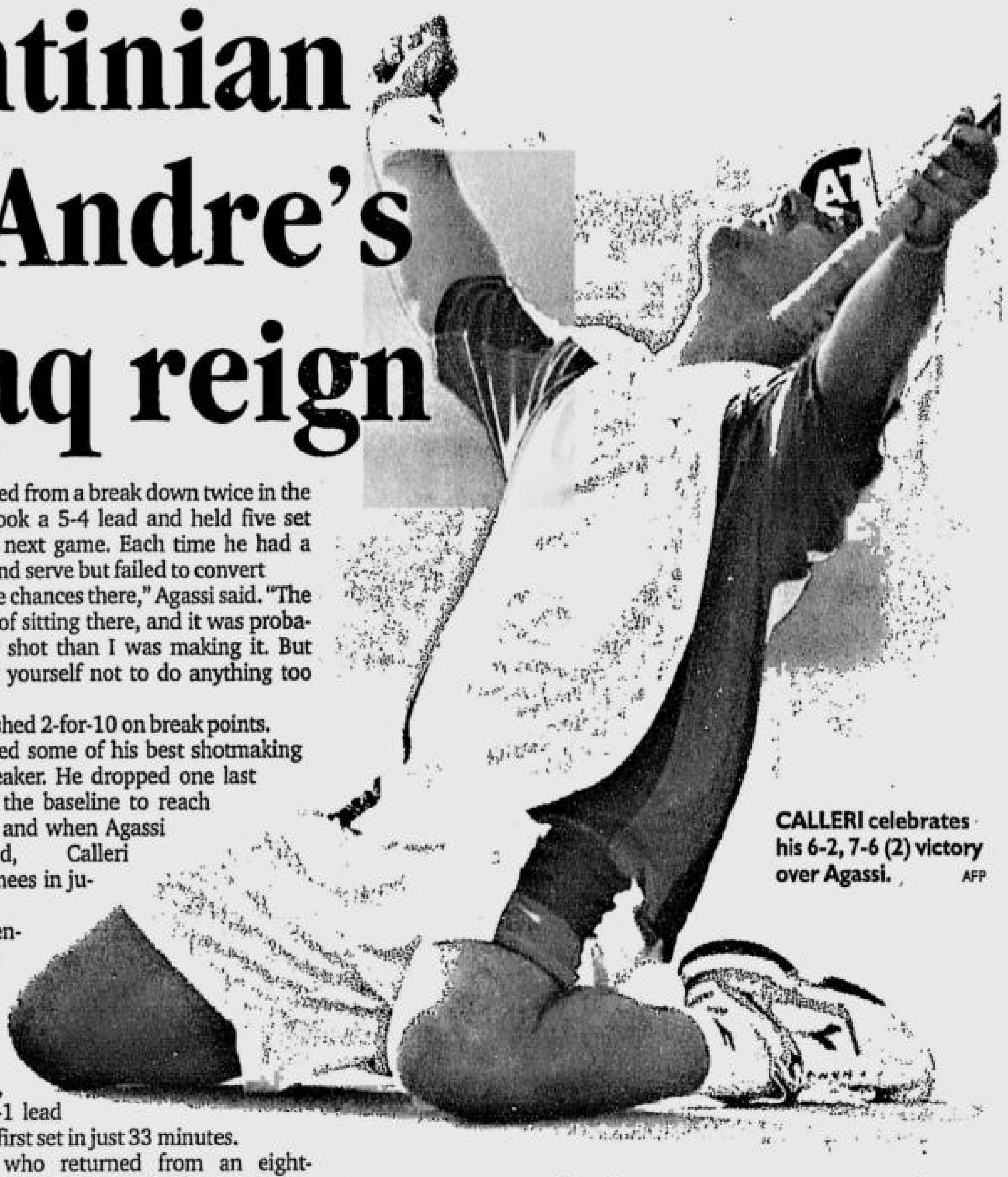
Argentinian ends Andre's Nasdaq reign

AGASSI



CALLERI celebrates his 6-2, 7-6 (2) victory over Agassi. AFP

KEY BISCAYNE, Florida—Andre Agassi's reign on Key Biscayne ended Tuesday when he lost to Agustin Calleri of Argentina, 6-2, 7-6 (2), in the fourth round of the Nasdaq-100 Open.

Agassi had won three consecutive titles and 19 straight matches in the tournament. He was bidding for his seventh title in the event and his 800th match victory.

The 20th-seeded Calleri served poorly but dominated from the baseline, repeatedly skipping shots off the line. He hit 47 winners, many on backhands into the corner that Agassi didn't even try to chase.

"He was just playing too good for a long stretch of time out there," the fourth-seeded Agassi said.

In other men's play, second-seeded American Andy Roddick reached the quarterfinals for just the second time. He lost only 10 points on his serve and needed barely an hour to eliminate unseeded Guillermo Canas of Argentina, 6-3, 6-3.

Roddick's opponent Thursday will be fifth-seeded Carlos Moya of Spain, who beat No. 19 countryman Tommy Robredo, 6-3, 6-3.

Unseeded Vince Spadea, denied a berth Monday on the US Davis Cup team, added to his recent run of upsets by beating No. 9 Paradorn Srichaphan of Thailand, 5-7, 6-3, 6-2. Spadea will play Calleri on Thursday.

Spanish 17-year-old Rafael Nadal was unable to summon the shotmaking that helped him upset top-ranked Roger Federer in the third round. Nadal lost to No. 21-seeded Fernando Gonzalez of Chile, 7-6 (1), 4-6, 6-2.

On the women's side, top-seeded Serena Williams of the United States won the tournament's most lopsided quarterfinal since 1996, beating countrywoman Jill Craybas, 6-0, 6-1.

Williams' opponent in the semifinals Thursday will be 25th-seeded Eleni Daniilidou of Greece, who beat Karolina Sprem of Croatia 6-1, 6-3.

Agassi rallied from a break down twice in the second set, took a 5-4 lead and held five set points in the next game. Each time he had a look at a second serve but failed to convert

"I had some chances there," Agassi said. "The ball was sort of sitting there, and it was probably an easier shot than I was making it. But you're telling yourself not to do anything too stupid."

Agassi finished 2-for-10 on break points.

Calleri saved some of his best shotmaking for the tiebreaker. He dropped one last forehand on the baseline to reach match point, and when Agassi double-faulted, Calleri sank to his knees in jubilation.

The Argentine dominated from the start. He broke in the opening game, raced to a 4-1 lead and won the first set in just 33 minutes.

Williams, who returned from an eight-month layoff last week, won the first 10 games and needed just 55 minutes to advance to the women's semifinals.

The Williams sisters remain on course to resume their sibling rivalry in the final Saturday. Venus Williams faces No. 5 Elena Dementieva of Russia in the quarterfinals Wednesday.

Also on the men's side, No. 3-seeded Guillermo Coria of Argentina won the final five games to overtake French qualifier Julien Benneteau, 7-6 (3), 2-6, 7-5, and Nicolas Kiefer of Germany eliminated No. 12 Sebastien Grosjean of France, 6-4, 6-2.

Coria was on the brink of elimination against Benneteau, who beat 16th-seeded Mardy Fish in the first round, and was the only qualifier to reach the fourth in a career-best effort. *AP*

Tampus defense set April 13

THE TITLE defense of Pan-Asian Boxing Association junior flyweight champion Marvin "Leyte Bomber" Tampus against Indonesian Vicky Tahumil on April 13 in Jakarta has been declared by the Paba as a mandatory defense.

Paba director-general Alan Kim has already informed all parties involved in the negotiation of the bout's mandatory nature, including Tampus' manager Joy Ouano and Tahumil's Indon promoter Herry "Aseng" Sugiarto.

The dynamite-fisted Tampus of Bato, Leyte, fighting out of Cebu's Stonewall Boxing Gym, will risk his title in a 12-round showdown with the southpaw Tahumil, the Paba No. 3, at the Indosiar Studio in Jakarta.

Tampus is currently in Jakarta undergoing rigid training with OPBF minimum weight champ Rodel Mayol and trainer Carl Peñalosa Jr. *Salven Lagumbay, Contributor*

Aussie ousts last RP boys singles hope

AUSTRALIAN Lachlan Ferguson lived up to his billing yesterday, eliminating Filipino wild card Kyle Joshua Dandan, 7-6 (4), 7-5, to reach the third round of the 15th Mitsubishi Lancer International Juniors Tennis Championships at the Rizal Memorial Tennis Center.

Ferguson, currently No. 48 in the ITF Juniors ranking and seeded No. 8 here, rode a steady serve in hurdling Dandan, who fought a gallant battle throughout.

"It was a very tough match, I was playing against a very good player," said Dandan, whose exit ended the Philippine campaign in the boys' singles.

"I gave my best but it was not good enough," added the 14-year-old Dandan, who played in the prestigious Orange Bowl Junior Championships two years ago.

Ferguson's next opponent will be No. 14 Antal Van Der Duim of the Netherlands, who needed an extra set to beat German Philipp Piyamongkol, 6-4, 2-6, 6-1.

Australian third seed Joel Kerley and compatriot Todd Ley, also advanced.

Kerley rallied past countryman Andrew Coelho, 6-1, 4-6, 6-3, and will next meet Romanian Victor Bogi Leonte, who ousted No. 15 Indian Navdeep Singh, 5-7, 6-4, 6-1.

Ley, on the other hand, conquered No. 13 Weerapat Doakmaiklee of Thailand, 6-3, 6-2.

Four Indians, led by top seed Karan Rastogi, remained in the hunt for the title in this 25-nation event sponsored by Wilson balls and Accel Sports.

Rastogi, the world's No. 5 junior, breezed past Hong Kong's Martin Sayer, 6-0, 6-2, to advance against ninth seed Tom Rushby of Great Britain, a 7-5, 6-3 winner over Luka Ocvirk of Slovenia.

The other Indians booking third-round berths were No. 6 Diyij Sharan, who prevailed over Elliot Wronski of Great Britain, 6-3, 6-3, No. 7 Tushar Liberhan, who beat Indonesian Aryton Wibowo, 6-0, 6-2, and No. 12 Rupesh Roy, who survived Australian Steven Popovic, 7-5, 1-6, 6-4.

In other matches, fourth seed William Ward of New Zealand defeated Australian Steven Goh, 7-5, 6-2, fifth seed Coen Van Kuelen of the Netherlands outplayed Syrym Abdukhalikov of Kazakhstan, 7-6 (6), 6-2, and No. 10 Philipp Oswald of Austria defeated qualifier Richard Wire of Great Britain, 6-3, 3-6, 7-6 (5).

Blunder

SPECTATOR

Al S. Mendoza

THE GOOD news is that the Philippines won the 14th Asian Cities Chess Championship.

The bad news is that Toti Abundo committed an indiscretion that almost destroyed not only the good name of the Filipino chess player but also the image of Philippine sports.

Before I go to the details, let me first congratulate Mayor Francis Tolentino of Tagaytay City for not only coming up with a world-class style of hosting a chess championship but also for his able leadership in leading the Tagaytay Chess Team to the championship. His appointment of Chris Mangulabnan as Tagaytay City's team captain had reaped the expected dividends.

For one, Tagaytay's victory ended a losing drought for the country in the biennial championship that lasted 25 years. The last time we won it was in 1979, when Eugene Torre was just the only Grandmaster from Asia.

For another, Tagaytay's triumph was historic since it marked the first time that the host city went on to win the championship.

Here's a glass to the 53-year-old Torre, the Team's Board 1. Torre's latest feather to his cap comes on the heels of his victories only a while back in Belgium and the SEA Games in Vietnam.

As I keep saying, I have not lost faith in Eugene, a man with the purest of hearts. His dedication to the game that has now spanned almost five decades is something that should continue to spur the growth of the sport in this talent-rich nation, whose young woodpushers of today should be eternally inspired by Eugene Torre's impregnable work ethics.

Listen to Eugene, an author of a chess book dedicated to the future chess players of the land: "As always, I dedicate this victory again to the Filipino people. I hope that in my own little way anew, I have contributed something to our young chess players wishing to someday achieve their dreams of becoming grandmasters."

With Eugene in the victorious Tagaytay Team are his fellow GM Joey Antonio and International Masters Ronald Dableo and Jayson Gonzales. Joey, Ronald and Jayson also deserve our praise and applause. It was not easy for them winning the crown, coming as it did amid a strong challenge from nearly 200 players spread in 19 teams/cities from 15 countries.

It was a victory to crow about since Tagaytay City beat powerhouse Guangzhou (China), which placed second, and Pavlodar (Kazakhstan), the defending champion, which placed fifth behind Mandaluyong (third) and Pasay (fourth).

Oh, yes, speaking of Mandaluyong, it was this contingent which bore the brunt of Toti Abundo's indiscretion when Toti accused Mandaluyong players of fixing their matches against players from Tanauan, Batangas.

It was an accusation so wild it plumbed the depths of mediocrity for a guy of Toti Abundo's supposedly unsullied reputation of fairness and levelheadedness. So hurt was Willie Abalos, the Mandaluyong City leader, that he couldn't contain his anger while exposing Toti's indiscretion to the media. I heard Willie on dzSR (Sports Radio) 918 pour his heart out the day after the chess tournament had concluded. Some papers had carried with prominence Toti's booboo and Willie's tirades, and I wonder why one broadsheet that sent its own reporter never wrote a single line about this chess black eye inflicted by Toti.

A case of selective reportage?

Although Toti Abundo went on record to apologize for his misdeed as attested by Willie Abalos, Toti's uncalled for outburst would go down in history as one that amounted to conduct unbecoming a Tournament director, who was recently installed executive director of the organizing National Chess Federation of the Philippines under a swirl of controversy.

May it never happen again, Toti, or I'll have you shipped back to Moscow, if not Siberia.

***

FASTBREAK. Easy Street's Ed Picson said PBA Commissioner Noli Eala is turning a new leaf today, April 1. Noli will celebrate his natal day right in the land of birth of Ed Picson, which is Tacloban City, the venue for today's PBA game pitting Talk 'N Text against Purefoods at the Leyte National High School gym; it will be telecast starting at 7 p.m. over ABC 5. You may not know this but Pareng Ed and Commissioner Eala have combined to make PBA history today since Tacloban City is hosting its first PBA game ever. And, yes, my Pareng Ed said Rep. Ted Failon, who is not running for reelection, did a lot to make today's PBA game a reality. In closing, I greet Commissioner Eala a happy, happy birthday. I am raising today my own glass to a fellow April boy.

Yankees lose opening game vs Devil Rays

TOKYO—When he sent his team to Japan, George Steinbrenner wanted his players to bring back just two presents: a pair of wins.

Well, the New York Yankees didn't exactly turn the Devil Rays into sushi in Game 1 and now Game 2 has turned into a must win if there's any hope of keeping The Boss happy.

It's already clear the Yanks aren't going 162-0.

"We expect perfection," said former New York Mayor Rudolph Giuliani, who followed his favorite team halfway around the world to watch them play in the Tokyo Dome. "You have to win the World Series, and if you don't, you don't meet the expectation."

So this US$183 million collection of superstars looked like "The Bad News Bears Go to Japan" in Alex Rodriguez's first game in pinstripes, an 8-3 loss to Tampa Bay on Tuesday.

New York was outhit 15-7, Derek Jeter went 0-for-5 in the leadoff spot and Mike Mussina twice failed to hold leads, saying he still felt out of synch because of the 11,600-kilometer (7,250-mile) trip.

Chill out, Yankees' fans: The 1998 edition started 0-3, lost four of its first five, and still wound up squeaking through to the playoffs with 114 wins.

That was little consolation for some New Yorkers. *AP*

Biggest-ever . . .

From page A21

Hay Dev't Co., Philippine Wine Merchant, Club Leisure Management Corp., Splash Island, Oakley, Caramba, Starmaker and Boysen.

The club's sports and games committee headed by Freddie Mendoza has made sure that all the members and guests playing will enjoy first-class hospitality arrangements.

Mendoza said there will be free breakfast and lunch for the first three days when tee-off will either be at 7:30 (Legends) and 8 a.m (Masters) and dinner on the last day when the field will all be taking off at 11:30 a.m.

Aside from the teams of Southwoods chairman of the board Bob Sobrepeña-Monette Garcia, also in the field are young guns Michael Bibat and Tonton Asistio who are paired with Globe executives James Ileto and Roland Dallarte, respectively. George Blaylock is playing with Mike Osmeña while Mel Dizon has Dante Ong as teammate.

Favored in the gross competition is the tandem of Larry Tojino and Manoling Chan.

SAN Andres receives his Asian Junior Class A trophy from Namssa president Ken Falco during the awards rites of the 2004 FIM International Motocross Championships. San Andres, who is also backed by Sukida Motorcycles, Oakley, Remcor Motors, HJC Helmet, UFO, Renthal, Alpine Star, Accerbis and JBS Bikeshop, also took the Novice Open and Novice 125. At San Andres' left is Malaysian rider Amir Yussof while at his right is Guam's Sean Lipanovich.

San Andres sizzles in motocross meet

PUERTO PRINCESA—Revtex Wonder Boy Kenneth San Andres ruled all of his three events to share the limelight in the two-day motocross extravaganza in Puerto Princesa.

San Andres, putting on a dazzling show with his new bike, topped both the Novice 125 and Novice Open classes of the Philippine National Motocross Championship that was organized by the National Motorcycle Sports Association (Namssa) on Saturday.

The following day, San Andres climaxed his awesome feat with another first place finish in the Asian Junior Class A of the 2004 FIM International Motocross Championships-Motocross Masters Asia to the deafening approval of close to 40,000 Palaweños.

"This only goes to show that Kenneth is fearless in the junior category," said San Andres' father Jun-Jun, himself a Revtex mainstay. "His focus and maturity are amazing."

The 15-year-old San Andres, who got to use his 2004 model, 125cc bike for the first time, groped for form early in the race as he took a spill in the first heat of the Asian Junior class. But the Philippine Sportswriters Association awardee for junior motocross recovered his bearings, caught up with his rivals before making them eat his dust for a 100-meter win.

San Andres, who is also backed by Sukida Motorcycles, Oakley, Remcor Motors, HJC Helmet, UFO, Renthal, Alpine Star, Accerbis and JBS Bikeshop, shoved Winsor Pamorca (2nd) and Joey Barnido (3rd) to the backseat the Novice 125 where the Rookie of the Year is chosen, while crushing the challenge of Kimboy Pineda (2nd) and Pamorca in the Novice Open.

So dominating were Revtex riders, that they turned the two-day moto festival into their own private party with seven triumphs in all, also counting the three of Revtex Rocket Glenn Aguilar in the Pro Open, 125 and FIM event, plus the Peewee class triumph of Raf Enriquez.

Even Aguilar's top back-up in Bebet dela Cruz made a good account of himself in the FIM event, where he finished a fighting 6th in a field of 20 of Asia's best riders. He is the 2nd best Filipino in the field.

"Kenneth San Andres and Glenn Aguilar's dramatic wins in the Palawan leg of the FIM Championships reaffirm Revtex team's sheer determination to succeed," said Caltex District Manager Jet Vicencio. The event was organized by Namssa, with the full support of city Mayor Edward Hagedorn.

Tours, Leisure & Chow

cmadamba@inquirer.com.ph
897-8808 local 209 and 238

Alden Joshua Cedo, Graphics Design

Aries Espinosa, Editor

Easter Eggstravaganza at New World Renaissance Hotel

NEW WORLD Renaissance Hotel invites families to celebrate Easter Sunday on April 11 at the deluxe property as it offers a choice of delicious buffet lunches and fun-filled activities.

At Emperor Court, the hotel's premiere Chinese restaurant, partake of its lavish buffet of well loved regional Chinese dishes at P950+. The bustling Coffee Shop features a lunch buffet with an impressive line-up of mouthwatering international and Asian fare, also at P950+. Creative continental restaurant Bocarinos offers an elegant Easter Sunday Chef's Table Menu including a tantalizing array of holiday appetizers and desserts at P990+. At the Lobby Lounge, enjoy a special lunch buffet at P580+. What's more, for every P500 food consumption at any of the hotel's restaurants on Easter Sunday, an invitation to an "eggsclusive" Easter Egg Hunt will be given. The hunt will be at the Grand Ballroom from 2 to 3 p.m. Furthermore, all children will surely enjoy "eggciting" face painting and magic tricks performed by Wizzo the Clown to be held at the Ballroom Foyer from 12:30 to 2 p.m. Children can also join the egg painting contest at the lobby from 12 to 2 p.m.

For that much needed relaxation during the holidays, why not spend a few days at the deluxe hotel and avail of its Easter Room Package? For only, P3,500++, get to stay at a deluxe room (single or double occupancy with 2 children below 12 years old) inclusive of buffet breakfast for 2 persons at the Coffee Shop offered on April 8 to 11. Guests also get 2 invitations to the Easter Egg Hunt. The Easter Room Package is available from April 8 to 11 for local residents only. For more information and reservations, call the New World Renaissance Hotel at 8116888.

Where to Stay Where to GO

A weekly directory of the country's best establishments

NEW WORLD RENAISSANCE HOTEL
MAKATI CITY
New World Renaissance Hotel
Esperanza St. cor. makati Ave., Makati City
Tel. 811-6888/Fax. 811-6777
www.marriott.com

Makati Shangri-La
MANILA
Makati Shangri-La Hotel
Ayala Ave. cor. Makati Ave., Makati City
Tel. 813-8888/ Fax 813-5499
www.shangri-la.com

Dusit Hotel Nikko
Dusit Hotel Nikko
Ayala Center, 1223 Makati City Phil.
Tel. 867-3333 Email: dusitmnl@dusit.com
http://manila.dusit.com

Evercrest Golf Club Resort, Inc.
Km. 72 Batulao, Nasugbu, Batangas
Tel. (02) 712-9293 to 98
Fax (02) 712-9299
Manila Sales Office 733-3822/733-9955

Mactan Island Resort
Mactan Island Resort
Punta Engano Road, Lapu Lapu Cebu
Tel. (632) 231-0288/Fax (632) 231-1688
www.shangri-la.com

INTERCONTINENTAL
Intercontinental Manila
1 Ayala Avenue, Makati City
Tel 815-9711
www.intercontinental.com

ASTORIA PLAZA
Serviced Residential Suites
ASTORIA PLAZA
15 J. Escriva Drive, Ortigas Business District,
Pasig City 1600
Tel 687-1111 Fax 910-0370
Email: sales@astoriaplaza.com

City Garden Hotel-Makati
Makati Ave., cor. Kalayaan St., Makati City
Tel. (02) 899-1111 Fax. (02) 899-1415
Email: makati:citygardenhotels.com

Executive Plaza Hotel
1630 A Mabini St., Malate, Manila
Tel 523-1000 /fax 525-8979
Email: sales@executiveplazahotel.com
www.executiveplazahotel.com

HOTEL VENIZ BAGUIO
Hotel Veniz
No. 1 Abanao St. Baguio City
Tel. (074) 446-0700 to 03
Fax (074) 446-0704
Email: hotelveniz@skyinet.net
www.hotelveniz.com

HOTEL SUPREME
Hotel Supreme
113 Magsaysay Ave., Baguio City
Tel. (074) 443-2011 to 18 / Fax. (074) 442-2855

Skyrise Hotel
18 Dominican Road, Baguio City
Tel (074) 445-6834 to 36 /fax (074) 443-3897

THE MARCO POLO
DAVAO
The Marco Polo
CM Recto St. Davao City 8000
Tel. (082) 221-0888/fax (082) 225-0111
www.marcopolohotels.com

Grand Regal Hotel Davao
J. P. Laurel St., Lanang, Davao City
Tel (382) 235-0888 / (382) 234-3858

Taal Vista Hotel
Aguinaldo Highway, Tagaytay City
Tel. (046) 413-1000/Fax. (046) 413-1225

THE PENINSULA
MANILA
The Peninsula Manila Hotel
Cor. Ayala Ave. & Makati Ave., Makati City
Tel. 810-3456/ Fax 815-4825

MANDARIN ORIENTAL
MANILA
Mandarin Oriental Manila
Paseo de Roxas cor. Makati Ave. Makati City
Tel. 750-8888
www.mandarinoriental.com

The Bellevue Manila
North Bridgeway, Northgate
Alabang, Muntinlupa
Tel. (632) 771-8181/ fax (632) 771-8282
www.thebellevue.com.ph

WATERFRONT
Waterfront Hotel Lahug
1 Salinas Drive, Lahug Cebu City
Tel. (6332) 232-6888/Fax (6332)232-6880
www.waterfronthotels.net

WATERFRONT
MACTAN
Waterfront Hotel Mactan
1 Airport Road, Lapu Lapu City, 6015
Tel. (6332) 340-4888/fax (6332) 340-5693
www.waterfronthotels.net

THE ROYAL MANDAYA HOTEL
Royal Mandaya Hotel
J. Palma Gil St. Davao City
Tel. (082) 225-8888/fax (082) 225-1888

Camp John Hay Manor
Loakan Road, Baguio City
Tel. (074) 446-0231 to 50

City Travel Hotel
15 Kisad Road, Baguio City
Tel. (074) 445-0456 / Fax (074) 445-0457

Cooyeesan Hotel Plaza
Naguilian cor. Asin Road, Baguio City
Tel. (074) 447-8888 to 93/ (074) 447-8895 to 98
Fax. (074) 447-0494

The Golden Pine
Golden Pine Hotel and Restaurant
Intersection of Carino St. and Legarda
Road, Baguio City
Tel. (074)444-9970 to 71/740-8975/
Fax. (074) 446-0704
Email: goldenpineholte@skyinet.net

SOMERSET
SALCEDO MAKATI
Somerset Salcedo, Makati
H.V. dela Costa St., cor. L.P. Levista St., Salcedo Village, 1227 Makati City
Tel. 888-6668 Fax: 888-6655

SOMERSET
MILLENNIUM MAKATI
Somerset Millennium, Makati
No. 104 Aguirre St., Legaspi Village, 1229
Makati City
Tel. 888-0505 Fax: 812-7721

SOMERSET
OLYMPIA · MAKATI
Somerset Olympia, Makati
No. 7912, Makati Ave., 1220 Makati City
Tel. 812-1010 Fax: 818-8254

One-of-a-kind Easteruption at Mandarin Oriental

MANDARIN Oriental, Manila together with Gift Gate and Lego present Easteruption, a mind-blowing explosion of fun and surprises on April 11, Easter Sunday, at the ballroom.

Adorned with Easter's happy buntings, the ballroom buzzes at 9 a.m. with the traditional egg hunt. But apart from foraging for fancy looking eggs, young revelers are egged on to explore their mental and creative potentials through a host of exciting activities. Kids can look forward to a Lego building contest from Gift Gate, where they bring their own Lego Racers and Lego bricks to create masterpieces, drawing inspiration from the amazing display of life-sized Lego structures around them. A Russ Berrie photo corner will also be set up for moms and dads to take snapshots of their little tots from their own cameras. Kids will also have the zaniest fun, learning a thing or two from the wacky geniuses of Mad Science who stage the coolest experiments in town. Watch with amazement as Nitro Nap and Thermal Teri weave science magic with a Fire and Ice show and a slime experiment, after which kids get to take home a cup of gooey slime souvenirs. More Easter fun explodes with contests like egg and face painting, puzzle forming, and balloon-twisting. Mandarin Oriental's novel Easter Sunday programme is directed by Events by Gigi Bautista and Associates.

Brunch buffet tickets at Paseo Uno and Tin Hau for P1,280++ (adults) and P640++ (children ages 5 to 12) includes a ticket to Easteruption. At Tivoli, a brunch buffet menu that includes a ticket to Easteruption is offered at P1,450++ (adults) and P725++ (children ages 5-12). Easteruption tickets entitle holders to the egg hunt, Mad Science shows, games, and loot bag are sold at P375++ per person. Easter room packages inclusive of breakfast for two and a ticket to Easteruption are offered to local residents from April 9 to 11. Package rates start at P3,400++ for an overnight stay for two in a superior room. For an Easter Sunday celebration like no other, call 750-8888 ext. 2401 (for Easteruption) and 2304 (for rooms).

EXECUTIVE PLAZA HOTEL'S CONTRACT SIGNING WITH DUTY FREE PHILIPPINES

The Executive Plaza Hotel, together with Palm Plaza Hotel and Las Palmas Hotel recently established a partnership with Duty Free Philippines in connection with the latter's Balikbayan Plus Program. This is in support of the Department of Tourism's effort in providing the best benefits and privileges to our balikbayans through the Balikbayan Plus Card. Shown in the photo are (from left): Ms. Anne U. Dizon - Las Palmas Hotel sales manager, Mr. Alexis A. Crescini - Duty Free Philippines marketing programs head, Ms. Claire B. Altea - Duty Free Philippines account executive, Ms. Ghie G. Delos Santos - The Palm Hotels corporate director of sales, Ms. Ninnette O. Soliman - Executive Plaza Hotel sales manager and Ms. Barbie A. Canlas - Palm Plaza Hotel sales manager.

Its party time at Fiesta San Miguel

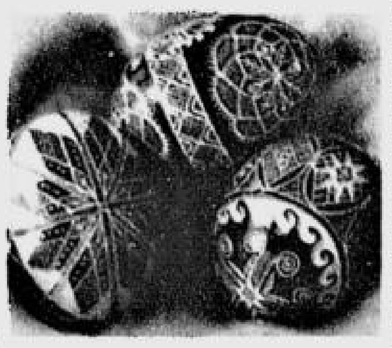
GUARANTEED to make your nightlife fun and unforgettable is Fiesta San Miguel's entertainment line-up with some of the country's best bands this April.

Start your Monday with Route '70's revival songs; then pop and jazz music from Jed Madella with Gail Blanco, and the up-beat music of Prime Council every Tuesday; hear old songs you love from the Moonstrucks on Wednesdays; expect combination of R&B and retro music with Pido and Take One back-to-back with Retrospect on Thursdays; spend cool Fridays with George and Route '70; and dance to the music of Red Velvet every Saturday.

Fiesta San Miguel is the first and only restaurant and bar offering freshly brewed beer along with an array of delectable Filipino dishes. Enjoy beef-all-you-can for only P270++ from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. No cover charge. For queries, call 867-3333 local 3308.

Astoria Plaza offers Zensational Lenten 2+1 advantage

MAKE the most of Lent and check into Astoria Plaza's one- or two-bedroom suites with family and loved ones and be fully recharged with the Zen ambience. Astoria Plaza's Lenten 2+1 Advantage gives a free extra night for every two straight nights booked.



Check into a one-bedroom suite for only P4,250 or a two-bedroom suite for only P5,745 and enjoy overnight room accommodations with complimentary breakfast, free shuttle service to nearby churches, use of the kiddie playroom, bottled mineral water, complimentary entrance to Astoria Plaza's Easter Egg Hunt, use of the gym and the pool, local newspapers and 10 percent discount at Stresscape Spa. The safe and fun kiddie playroom equipment have been provided by Little Tikes.

Astoria Plaza's Zensational Lenten 2+1 Advantage promo is valid from April 7 to 11. Rates are subject to service charge and government tax.

For inquiries and reservations, visit Astoria Plaza, call 687-1111, or check out www.astoriaplaza.com.

The Bellevue Hotel's Easter surprise

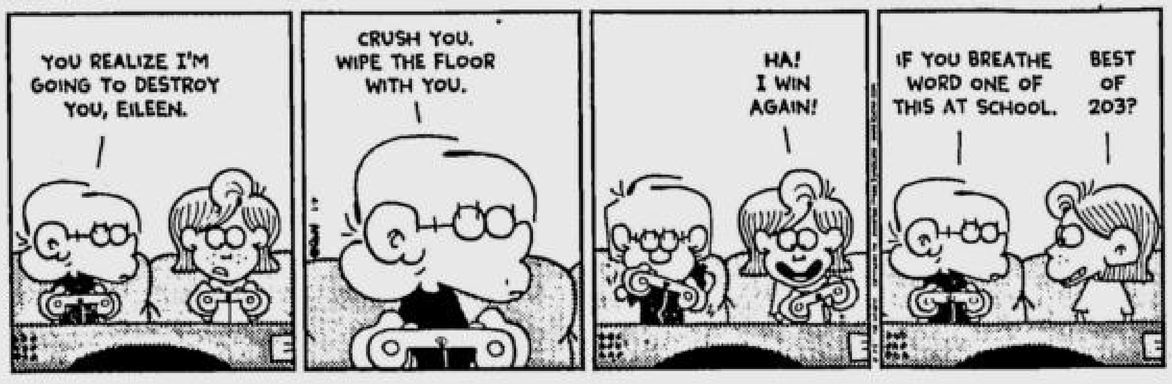
ALABANG'S premiere social and business destination, The Bellevue Hotel holds a merry Easter celebration with special promos for the whole family this Holy Week.

Spend two nights during the break at The Bellevue's luxurious deluxe room for only P5,000++ for a family of four (2 adults and 2 children below 12 years old). Guests to avail of this are entitled to two complimentary tickets to the exciting Bellevue Easter Wonderland party, a festive transformation of the ballroom into an Easter playground where one can enjoy mascots, games, the traditional Easter egg hunt and more.

Other perks include daily buffet breakfast at the delightful Café d' Asie Asian Specialty Restaurant, 10 percent discount on The Bellevue Spa Club services, 20 percent discount on buffet lunch and dinner during the Easter Treat at Café d' Asie on April 8 to 10, and complimentary use of the swimming pool and gym. Suite upgrades are available for an additional charge of P2,000++ per night. The Bellevue's Easter Promo is valid from April 5-11. For inquiries, call 771-8181.

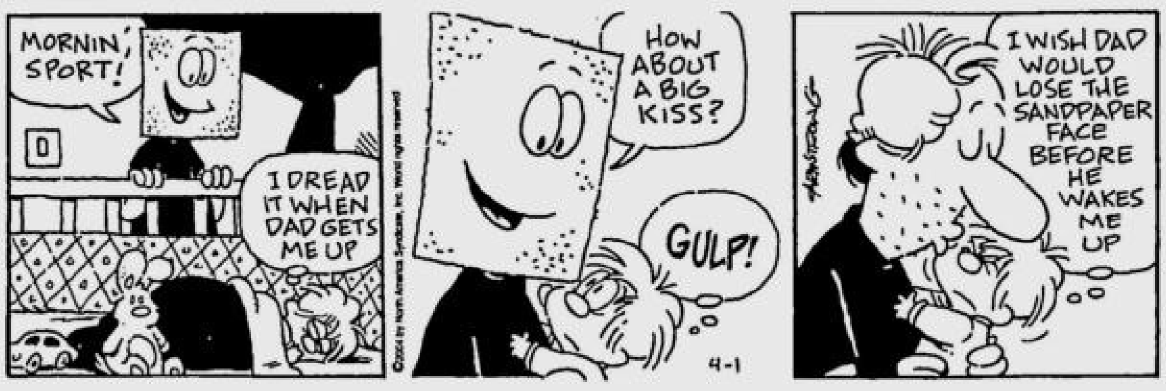
FOXTROT

BY BILL AMEND


YOU REALIZE I'M GOING TO DESTROY YOU, EILEEN.
CRUSH YOU. WIPE THE FLOOR WITH YOU.
HA! I WIN AGAIN!
IF YOU BREATHE WORD ONE OF THIS AT SCHOOL.
BEST OF 203?

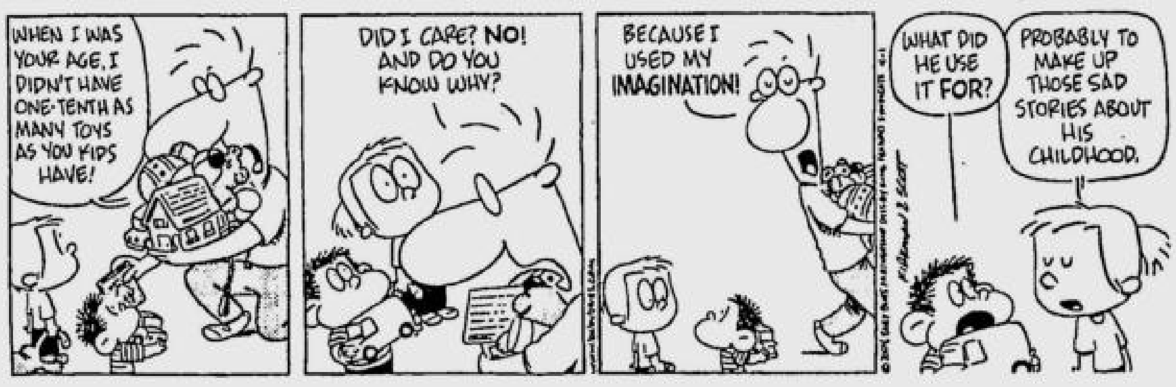
MARVIN

BY TOM ARMSTRONG


MORNIN', SPORT!
I DREAD IT WHEN DAD GETS ME UP
HOW ABOUT A BIG KISS?
GULP!
I WISH DAD WOULD LOSE THE SANDPAPER FACE BEFORE HE WAKES ME UP
4-1

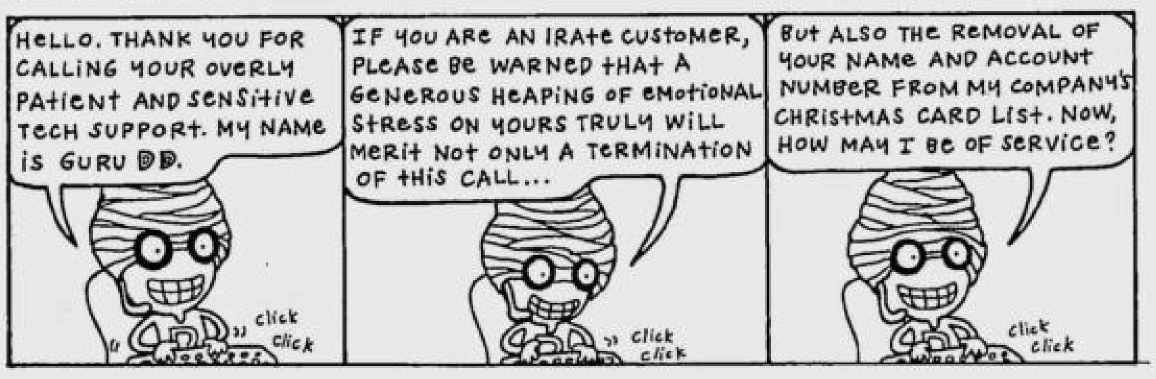
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


WHEN I WAS YOUR AGE, I DIDN'T HAVE ONE-TENTH AS MANY TOYS AS YOU KIDS HAVE!
DID I CARE? NO! AND DO YOU KNOW WHY?
BECAUSE I USED MY IMAGINATION!
WHAT DID HE USE IT FOR?
PROBABLY TO MAKE UP THOSE SAD STORIES ABOUT HIS CHILDHOOD.

ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


HELLO. THANK YOU FOR CALLING YOUR OVERLY PATIENT AND SENSITIVE TECH SUPPORT. MY NAME IS GURU DD.
click click
IF YOU ARE AN IRATE CUSTOMER, PLEASE BE WARNED THAT A GENEROUS HEAPING OF EMOTIONAL STRESS ON YOURS TRULY WILL MERIT NOT ONLY A TERMINATION OF THIS CALL...
click click
BUT ALSO THE REMOVAL OF YOUR NAME AND ACCOUNT NUMBER FROM MY COMPANY'S CHRISTMAS CARD LIST. NOW, HOW MAY I BE OF SERVICE?
click click

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: You are bold, straightforward and very hardworking. You often master a particular technique in life. People trust you because you're sincere and forthright. You respect history and methods that are tried and true. If you do something, you want to do it right. Exciting changes will take place this year: Stay light on your feet!

Birthdate of Debbie Reynolds, entertainer; Annette O'Toole, actress; Bijou Phillips, actress.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): With the Sun in your sign now, you easily attract others to you. In addition, you attract favorable circumstances to you. This means you should make hay while the sun shines!

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): This is a good time to talk to others; however, you need private time to do some serious thinking. (After all, it wasn't raining when Noah built the Ark.)

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): Be patient with a friend. Conflict with someone might irritate you now. Think about what your long-term objective is. Don't let petty anger blow this.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): This is good day to talk to your boss or a parent. The success of any project is picking and choosing your moments—and this is one of them!

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): Matters connected with publishing, the media and legal business continue to demand attention. Don't be afraid to speak up for yourself. The Moon in your sign today gives you an advantage.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): Your ability to research now is excellent. Those of you involved in publishing, higher education, advanced training or the newspaper business can do extremely well now.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): Be patient with partners. With the Sun as far away from your sign as it gets all year, you can't ask for the moon!

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): Most of us find it easy to postpone things. We let clutter and unpleasant tasks pile up. Right now, the Sun is giving you energy to work! Do it.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): The way the planets are arranged now, you feel unusually frisky and playful. You're creative, flirtatious and prankish! There's nothing wrong with this.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): Continue to focus on domestic matters and your home life. There's so much you want to do now. Be open to changes taking place with children.

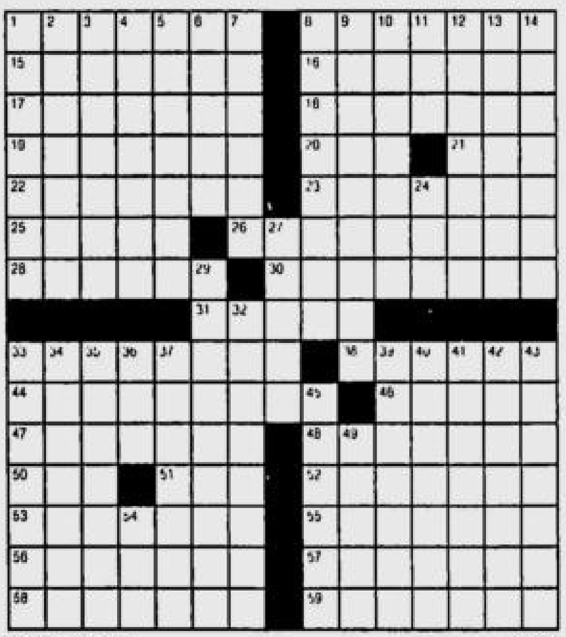
AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): Driving, reading and writing all assume more importance in your life right now. Discussions with siblings are significant. They might help you improve your home.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): Major changes at home, plus your need to shop more than usual, combine to make your focus on money quite keen. Perhaps you're counting your pennies, and you're thinking of ways to make more.

DAILY CROSSWORD

ACROSS

1 Old-time ursine enclosure
8 Homemade carpets
15 Fats Domino's first name
16 Disciple
17 Centennial Olympics city
18 More peevish
19 Lixiviates
20 Social connections
21 Book after Exod.
22 Coming toward the coast
23 Former
25 Bethlehem product
26 Disinfecting device
28 Untidy situations
30 Military snack bars
31 Santiago's country
33 Used a flail
38 Stirrup bone
44 Thin and fragile quality
46 Jungian soul
47 Slipped by
48 Snarls
50 To a man
51 "Shop __ You Drop"
52 Classic Charles Boyer film
53 Killing of a god
55 Metal currency
56 Locomotives
57 Movie house
58 Apartment dwellers
59 Like some seals



By Tom Pruce
Chicago, IL
4/1/04

DOWN

1 Belief in an ancient Semitic god
2 Informal alliance
3 Map collections
4 Pesky household critters
5 Tiny puncture
6 Collegiate starter?
7 Ribs
8 Illogical antonym
9 Italian range
10 "An Officer and a Gentleman" co-star
11 Queue after Q
12 Put into service
13 Singing club members
14 Restaurant employees
24 Haberdashery purchase
27 Corrosive substances
29 Romy of "What's New, Pussycat?"
32 Impetuously careless
33 One taking steps
34 Greek
35 Bring back into true
36 Key-punch bus.
37 Michelangelo's chapel
39 City on the Strait of Gibraltar
40 Of a painful spasmodic attack
41 Like a crested bird
42 Comes out into the open
43 People prone to giving lip
45 Incense spice
49 Ciao on Kauai
54 U.S. voter

Wednesday's Puzzle Solved

S	A	R	A	N	■	S	T	A	N	■	U	L	A	N
E	L	E	M	I	■	C	I	N	E	■	N	I	P	A
P	A	T	E	S	■	O	T	T	O	■	D	E	E	M
A	M	A	N	I	N	T	H	E	■	H	O	U	S	E
L	O	R	D	■	O	C	E	A	N	I	C	■	■	■
■	■	D	E	P	T	H	■	T	A	C	K	I	L	Y
B	R	A	D	S	■	■	D	E	S	■	S	M	E	E
R	O	N	■	I	S	W	O	R	T	H	■	P	O	W
E	S	T	A	■	A	R	E	■	■	U	M	A	S	S
R	E	S	T	O	R	E	■	T	E	N	E	T	■	■
■	■	■	T	W	I	S	T	E	R	■	R	I	M	S
T	W	O	I	N	■	T	H	E	S	T	R	E	E	T
H	O	A	R	■	G	L	E	N	■	H	I	N	D	U
E	R	S	E	■	N	E	S	S	■	U	L	C	E	R
N	E	T	S	■	P	R	E	Y	■	G	L	E	A	M

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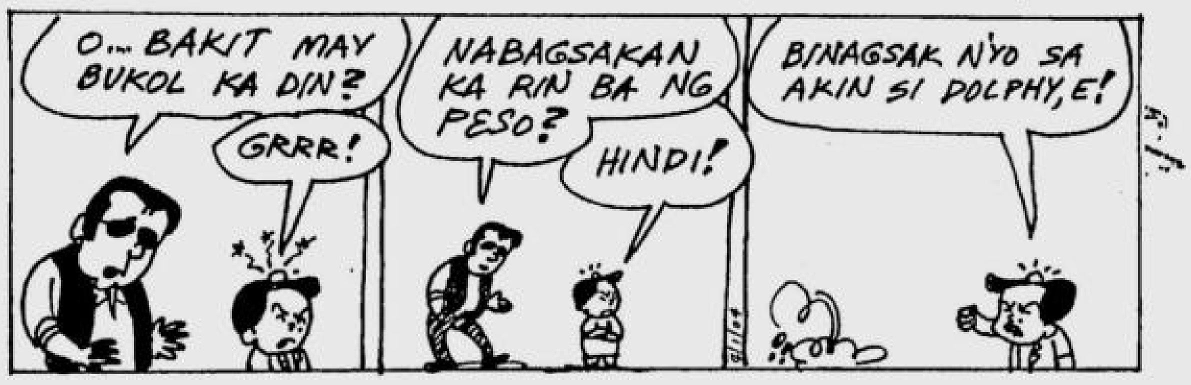
4/1/04

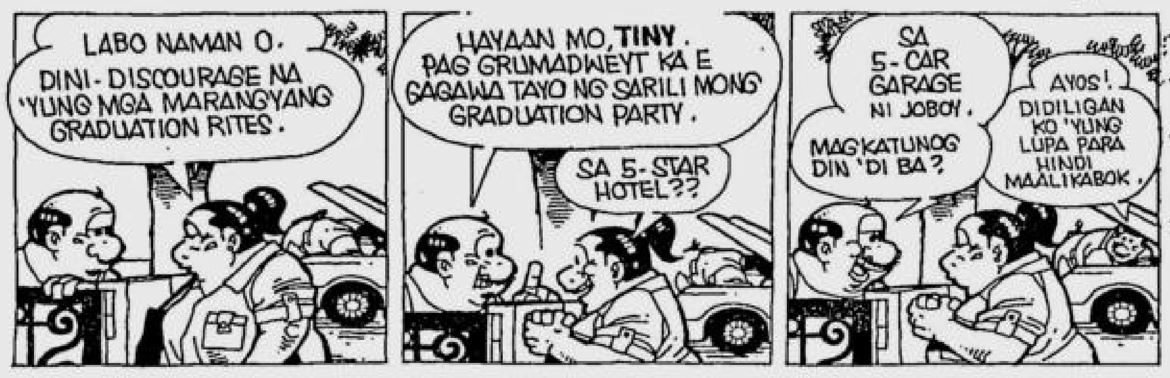
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


O... BAKIT MAY BUKOL KA DIN?
GRRR!
NABAGSAKAN KA RIN BA NG PESO?
HINDI!
BINAGSAK N'YO SA AKIN SI DOLPHY, E!

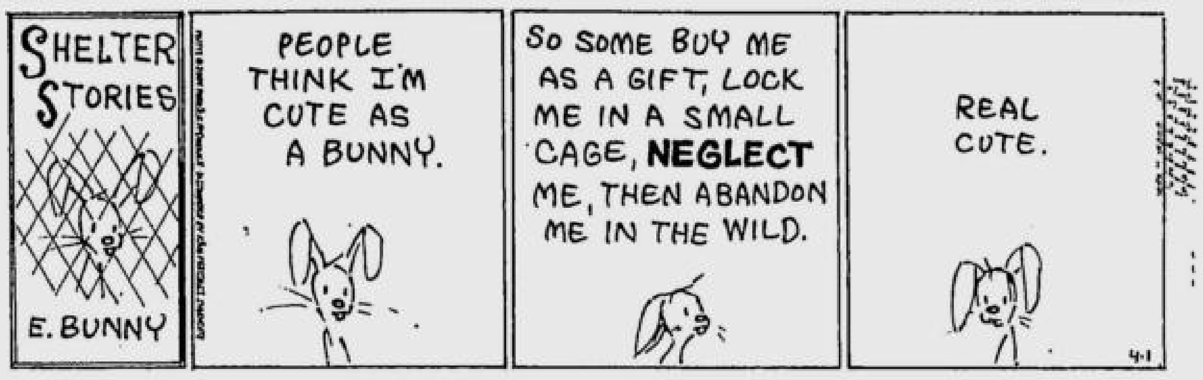
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


LABO NAMAN O. DINI-DISCOURAGE NA 'YUNG MGA MARANGYANG GRADUATION RITES.
HAYAAN MO, TINY. PAG GRUMADWEYT KA E GAGAWA TAYO NG SARILI MONG GRADUATION PARTY.
SA 5-STAR HOTEL??
SA 5-CAR GARAGE NI JOBOY.
MAGKATUNOG DIN 'DI BA?
AYOS!. DIDILIGAN KO 'YUNG LUPA PARA HINDI MAALIKABOK.

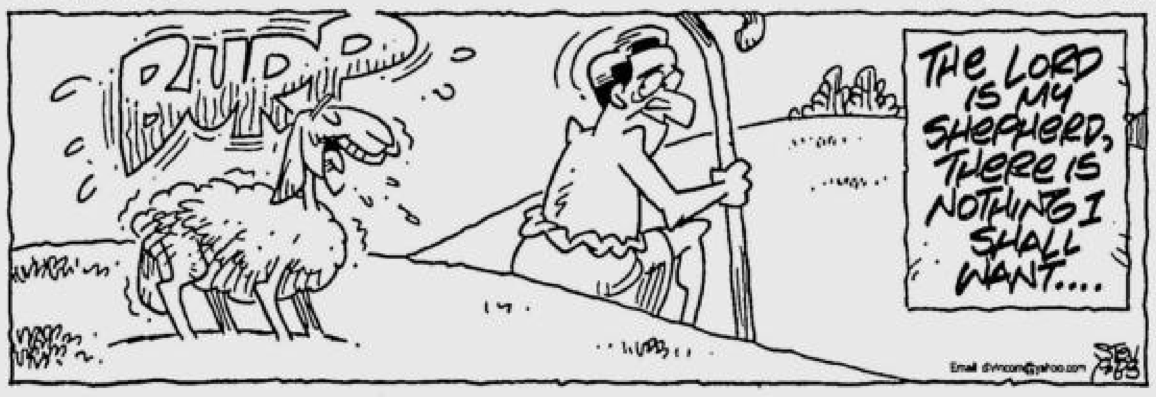
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


SHELTER STORIES
E. BUNNY
PEOPLE THINK I'M CUTE AS A BUNNY.
SO SOME BUY ME AS A GIFT, LOCK ME IN A SMALL CAGE, NEGLECT ME, THEN ABANDON ME IN THE WILD.
REAL CUTE.
4-1

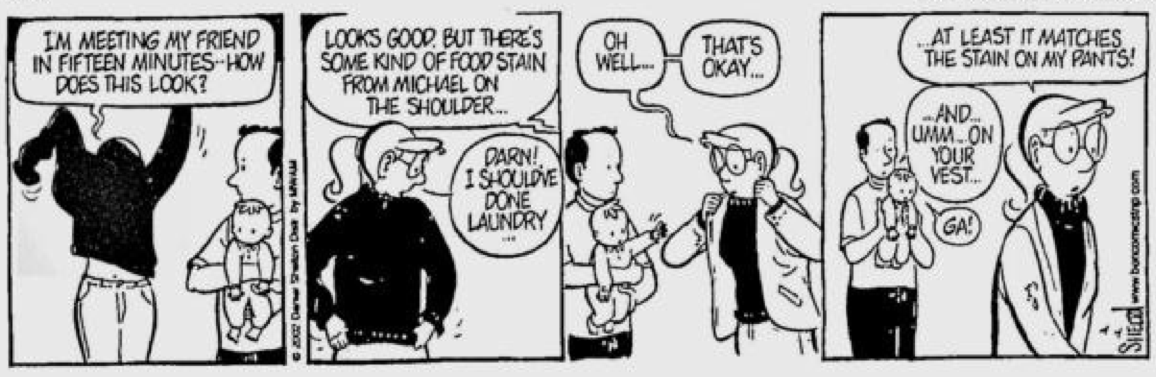
DIVINE COMEDY

BY STEVEN PABALINAS


BURP
THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD, THERE IS NOTHING I SHALL WANT....
Email divncom@yahoo.com

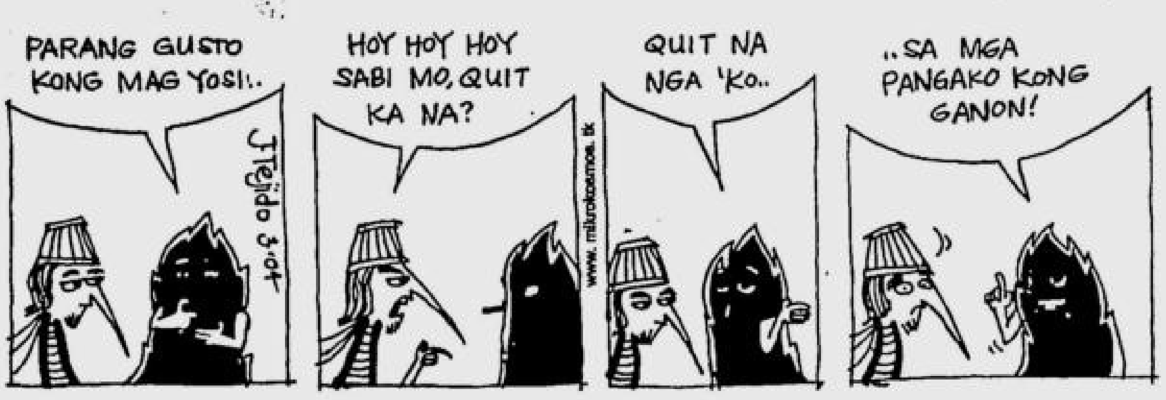
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


I'M MEETING MY FRIEND IN FIFTEEN MINUTES--HOW DOES THIS LOOK?
LOOKS GOOD, BUT THERE'S SOME KIND OF FOOD STAIN FROM MICHAEL ON THE SHOULDER...
DARN! I SHOULD'VE DONE LAUNDRY
OH WELL...
THAT'S OKAY...
...AT LEAST IT MATCHES THE STAIN ON MY PANTS!
...AND... UMM...ON YOUR VEST...
GA!
www.bencomicstrip.com

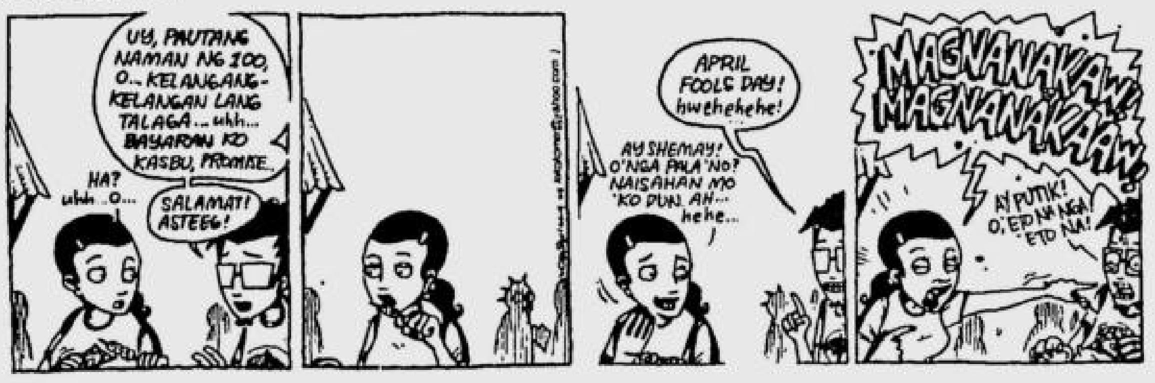
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


PARANG GUSTO KONG MAG YOSI!.
J Tejido 3.04
HOY HOY HOY SABI MO, QUIT KA NA?
www.mikrokosmos.tk
QUIT NA NGA 'KO..
..SA MGA PANGAKO KONG GANON!

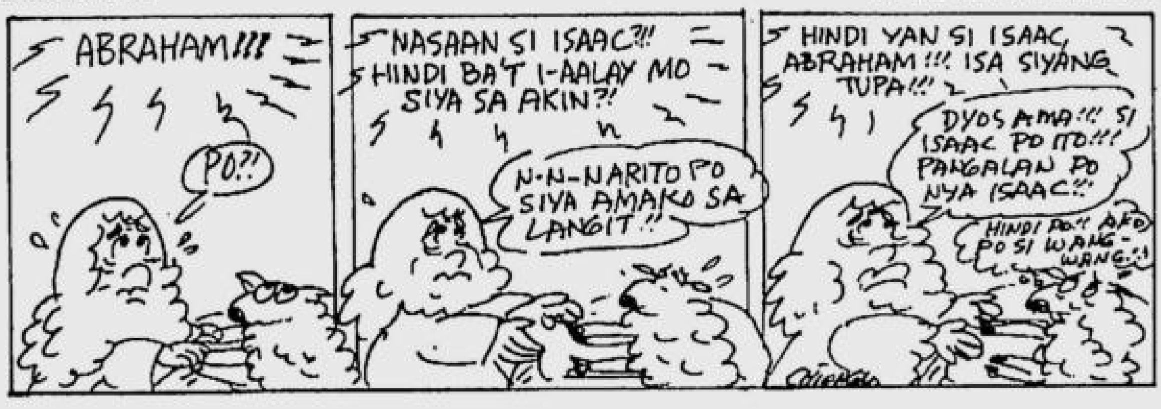
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


UY, PAUTANG NAMAN NG 100, O... KELANGANG-KELANGAN LANG TALAGA... uhh... BAYARAN KO KASBU, PROMISE.
HA? uhh... O...
SALAMAT! ASTEEG!
APRIL FOOLS DAY! hwehehehe!
AY SHEMAY! O'NGA PALA 'NO? NAISAHAN MO 'KO DUN AH... hehe...
MAGNANAKAW! MAGNANAKAAW!
AY PUTIK! O, ETO NA NGA! 'ETO NA!

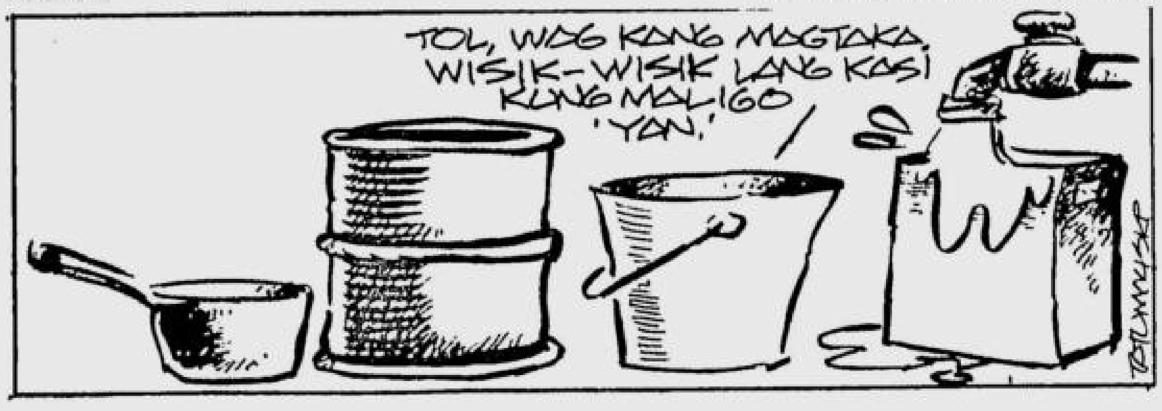
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


ABRAHAM!!!
PO?!
NASAAN SI ISAAC?!! HINDI BA'T I-AALAY MO SIYA SA AKIN?!
N-N-NARITO PO SIYA AMA KO SA LANGIT!!
HINDI YAN SI ISAAC, ABRAHAM!!! ISA SIYANG TUPA!!!
DYOS AMA!!! SI ISAAC PO ITO!!! PANGALAN PO NYA ISAAC!!
HINDI PO!! AKO PO SI WANG-WANG!!

TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


TOL, WAG KANG MAGTAKA. WISIK-WISIK LANG KASI KUNG MALIGO 'YAN.

Little boy lost

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

LAST Monday at 5:30 p.m., Channel 2 launched its new soap, "Mangarap Ka," starring **Piolo Pascual** and **Angelica Panganiban**. In the premiere episode, however, Piolo appeared only at the end, and Angelica was nowhere in sight.

This was because the first telecast concerned itself with the boy who will eventually become Piolo's sidekick as the soap's story unfolds.

Early on, the new series established itself as a drama-fantasy production. The boy was shown to be fixated on an action figure that came to life in his imagination. Later, he would equate this fictive figure with Piolo's character, who we surmise will become his protector against the people who wish him ill.

The boy does need protecting because a mysterious figure was shown in the first episode ordering an assault against his parents. The boy avoids being harmed through a fortuitous turn of events, which has him getting locked up in a container van, and being forced to travel by ship from Cebu to Manila.

The metropolis is about to do its worst with the hapless kid—but, just in the nick of time, Piolo's tough-guy character makes his appearance, and the boy meets his fantasy idol in the flesh.

This storytelling arc is clearly presented, but the initial episode's impact is blunted by some scripting flaws that dampen viewers' empathy with the kid.

The boy is supposed to be cute and endearing, but he ends up rubbing viewers the wrong way because he's made to keep wandering off and getting himself into trouble.

As a result, we get ticked off with him and don't worry about him when he gets himself into a series of fixes.

That is unfortunate, because it's important for viewers to feel for the boy, so they'll follow his adventures in the big city with interest and concern.

In addition, **Stefen Fermo**, the young actor who plays the boy is a natural and lively performer, so he deserves to come off better in the show. We trust that, in succeeding episodes, he'll be presented in a more positive and focused light.

On point of pacing, the new show does well. And some of its shots are interestingly atmospheric. Its fantasy animation effects are similarly on the up and up, and the actress who plays the boy's mother turns in a quietly effective performance.

At the end of the first episode, her character was shown to be in a coma, but we trust that she'll be made to recover in due time, so she can look for her missing child, who's lost in the tumultuous asphalt jungle of Quiapo, Manila.

Potential blockbusters

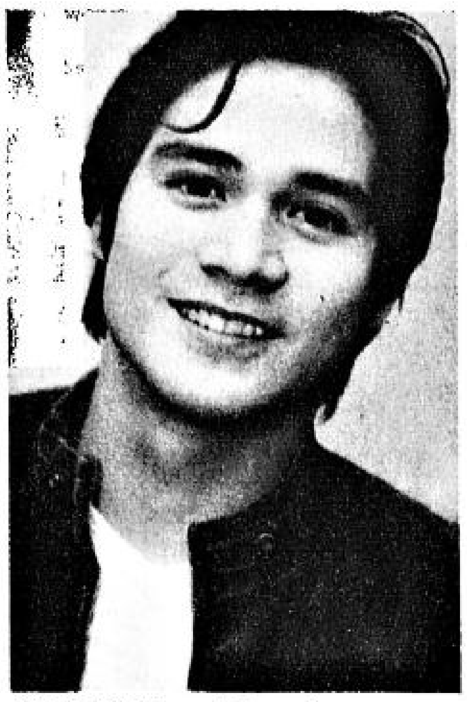
FANS of **Robert Redford, Will Smith, Jennifer Love Hewitt** and **Ben Stiller** can look forward to watching these new movies topbilling their favorite stars:

Robert Redford comes on strong in the suspense drama, "The Clearing," where he plays a powerful, self-made tycoon who suddenly finds himself fighting for his life after he's kidnapped in broad daylight. **Helen Mirren** is cast as his wife.

In "I, Robot," Will Smith portrays a detective who investigates a crime that might have been perpetrated by a robot—leading him to discover a far more frightening threat to the entire human race.

Jennifer Love Hewitt's new starrer is "Garfield," a live action/ CGI film adapted from the popular comic strip.

And Ben Stiller stars in "Underdogs," a comedy about a small gym threatened with extinction by a gleaming sports and fitness palace, unless a group of social rejects can emerge as victors in a dodgeball competition.



PASCUAL. Seen at the end

PANGANIBAN. Not seen at all.

'Menopause, the Musical'

MUSICAL-COMEDY stage buffs have only until April 3 to catch the hit show, "Menopause, the Musical" on extended run at Music Museum.

The singing, dancing and acting cast of four is paced by **Mitch Valdes**, who turns in a really hot and feisty performance. **Leo Rialp** directs.

'Maala-ala Mo Kaya'

THE APRIL 1 episode of Channel 2's "Maala-ala Mo Kaya" tells the inspiring story of "Star for A Night" finalist **Mark Bautista**'s determined bid to help improve his impoverished family's lot by making it as a singer.

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JIM CAVIEZEL

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MTRCB RATING: PARENTAL GUIDANCE 13
Parents are strongly cautioned in bringing along kids below 10 yrs. old because of some scenes that might stress their sensibilities

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Roselle, Victor couldn't be dating

DOLLY WOOD

Dolly Ann Carvajal

A FAN of singer-actress **Roselle Nava** e-mailed me that she does not believe Roselle is dating award-winning actor **Victor Neri** ("Filipinas").

As far as the e-mail sender knows, Roselle has a Chinese boyfriend. So, accusing Roselle of causing the rumored split of Victor and politician-actress **Aiko Melendez** is unfair, says the writer.

Indeed, neither Victor nor Aiko has admitted that they have parted ways. Hopefully theirs is just the usual lovers' quarrel.

Aiko has been through a lot in love's name so her heart deserves a better deal, one that's not subject to change without prior notice.

Cookie's fortune

COOKIE Chua and her band Color It Red have been in the music scene for 15 years already but they remain a crowd-drawer.

Cookie is one of the few local artists who refuses to follow trends. I fondly call her our **Norah Jones**. She has turned down offers to record an acoustic album because she feels that there's already an overkill in that type of music.

"I don't want to be recording an album that's mostly covers," says Cookie. "I prefer doing my own songs.

"I have nothing against playing back-up for some stars in some shows. What I resent is when they just lump me with other artists to represent a certain music genre. *'Yung tipong* smorgasboard."

Cookie used to teach voice lessons but it was too much of a headache for her. "It was so frustrating when I would give my all and some students wouldn't take the lessons seriously. All they did was retouch their make-up during class."

Cookie and her hubby **Earl Ignacio** have such a cool setup. "He hardly watches my gigs because he wants to give me space," she says. "It's such a waste of time worrying what your partner is up to when you're apart. We let each other be."

Their son **Joaquin** is turning 4 and is already showing signs of becoming another performer in the family. "*Sobrang bibo niya* for his age," gushes the mom. "We are enjoying him so much that we have no plans to have another baby yet."

With everything going for her, Cookie's name will never crumble in the music scene. And neither will her marriage.

My mom's story

DON'T miss my mom's heartwarming life story on "Magpakailanman," 9:30 p.m. tonight on GMA 7.

As I was browsing through old albums to find pictures of my mom for the show, I ran the whole gamut of emotions, from A-Z. I know I can never relive those moments with my mom, but in a way I can recapture them by watching her story tonight.

During the taping of the show, everybody had goose bumps because **Angelu de Leon**, when she was all made up, had an uncanny resemblance to my mom. There were some scenes where Angelu had a difficult time imitating my mom's famous laugh. But before she realized it, Angelu was able to approximate my mom's throaty laughter.

My tears are slowly turning into laughter as I gradually learn to remember without pain anymore.

2 babes and a girl

GUESS who is this sexy actress who told me that she has two boyfriends but both guys don't know of each other's existence in her life. So when she has to greet either of them on TV, she refers to them as "Babe," to play safe. And you thought only men fooled around. Some girls are wiser now and are beating the men in their own game.

Lovers must learn

I WATCHED "Partners with Mel Tiangco" last Sunday when the topic was inter-racial relationships. The guest pairs were **Geneva Cruz** and **KC Montero, Nancy Castiglione** and **Paolo Contis**, and **Rufa Mae Quinto** and **Rudy Hatfield**.

Among the lovebirds, Nancy and Paolo were the most demonstrative. To think that they were also the youngest in the group.

Gen and KC, and Rufa Mae and Rudy have obviously reached a more mature stage in their relationships so they didn't come across as gooey.

Paolo and Nancy even admitted that they would be spending Holy Week together in Phuket, Thailand. Nancy said that if she had her way, she would marry Paolo right now.

Nothing wrong with being head over heels in love. But maybe, when the initial headiness wears off, Nancy and Paolo will realize that there's more to love than being on Cloud 9. Been there, done that.

Here's some unsolicited advice for the young lovers. When walking on air, watch your step.

For feedback, e-mail friends_elpueblo@yahoo.com or dollyanne@truefaithband.com.

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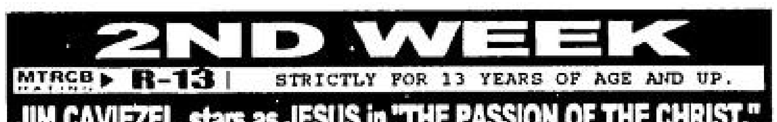

2ND WEEK
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JIM CAVIEZEL, stars as JESUS in "THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST." Now, see him in a different role.
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EVIL HITS THE ROAD
JIM CAVIEZEL RHONA MITRA
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MISSING
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-- Paul Clinton, CNN

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DID YOU KNOW...

Franco Laurel and Ciara Sotto were seen at Rustan's Makati Monday night, but not together. The husband of Ayen Munji had bodyguards, as usual.

A 'CSI' star under investigation

By Joyce C. Abaño

THE CSI TEAM: Szmanda, who plays George, is raring to go on the field like the rest of the gang.

HE'S a Marilyn Manson fan. And he enjoys a good laugh.

That is the best way to describe "Crime Scene Investigations'" wacky forensics lab technician and analyst Greg Sanders, show biz newcomer Eric Kyle Szmanda in real life.

The youngest member of the "CSI" team, Szmanda has been getting a lot more exposure for his role on the Jerry Bruckheimer television series than for his previous roles in other TV shows and movies.

"I couldn't ask for a better springboard," Szmanda said in a phone interview with INQUIRER Entertainment.

"There was no doubt in my mind, by the time they offered me the role, that the show was going to be huge. It was already doing really well, and I was really lucky to get in when I did. It's also a great learning environment."

"CSI" is about a team of forensics investigators who solve crimes by analyzing the evidence and through the use of high-tech equipment. The team is made up of William Petersen as Gil Grissom, Marg Helgenberger as Catherine Willows, Jorja-An Fox as Sara Sidle, Gary Dourdan as Warrick Brown, George Eads as Nick Stokes, Paul Guilfoyle as Jim Brass and Robert David Hall as Dr. Al Robbins.

Guest part

"I was cast on the show by a casting director that I had worked with the year before," Szmanda recalled. "It was just a guest part and it was originally written for a former construction worker. I didn't think it really applied to me so I tried to get out of it. I was told they really didn't know what kind of character they were looking for and she (casting director) just wanted me to come in and be me. So that's kind of how the character of Greg was born. They ended up offering me the role just by seeing my audition tape."

He was brought into the series in the first season in a recurring guest part, but was hired as a regular toward the season's end.

"I think there's quite a bit of me in my character," Szmanda said when asked if he had anything in common with George. "I bring as much of myself into it without detracting from the whole point of the show. The only difference probably is I lack points on the IQ scale."

Like his character, Szmanda loves science.

"I'm fascinated by DNA and all its properties. I like to get hands-on information and opportunities to do real DNA testing and stuff. It's the essence of human life and I want to know everything about it."

The series won the TV Guide Awards' Best New TV Series of the Year in 2001, the Golden Satellite Award for Best Drama Television Series in 2003, and the People's Choice Awards for Favorite Television Dramatic Series in 2003 and 2004.

"CSI" is now on its fourth season on AXN Asia aired every Wednesday at 9 p.m. in the Philippines.

In the new "CSI" season, the writers will start delving into the personal lives of the characters, according to Szmanda.

"Just a little bit here and there," he said. "Not too much that it will take the momentum we already have going. You're going to know everyone a little bit better and things are going to get a little bit complicated."

Szmanda's character evolving and getting a promotion is one of the unexpected twists of the new season.

"(My character) is training to be an investigator in the field now," said the actor. "I get to go to the crime scenes and I get to work in different departments through the next season. By the end of the next season I'll be a full-time investigator."

'ANALYST' ANALYZED. Szmanda in real life is a Marilyn Manson fan who believes the rock star has a message in his music

He said he—the actor, not the character—would be taking some forensics studies over the summer now that his character will be doing more field work on the series.

"I've been invited to go and study at the New Forensics Institute here in L.A.," Szmanda said. "Maybe just sit in on some classes and do some hands-on. I think I can benefit from this now that I'm working in the field. Up until now, it hadn't been necessary."

'Lurve' stories

When asked if his character will have any love interest on the show, Szmanda said, "It's fun to have a little flirtation but it's highly doubtful you'll see more 'lurve' stories on the series. It will kind of go against the whole concept of the show."

With the show's popularity, the 28-year-old Szmanda has become a familiar face to many people. His role is a welcome comic relief in the midst of grisly homicides and crime chronicles of the series. But what many people don't know is that when not acting, Szmanda lends his technical expertise to film—as a music supervisor.

Szmanda owns a production company called Doop, which combines acting and music. "I prefer to bring good music to the ears of the people," he said.

Manson's message

He claimed he had some influence on the selection of some of the music for "CSI" and that he was never disappointed with the choices of the music supervisor.

"I had a Marilyn Manson track on the show during the second season," Szmanda said. "In the sequence, I was working in the lab and originally they wanted me to be rockin' to U2, but you can't rock to U2. So I talked them into using Manson's track.

"The music supervisor is doing a fabulous job, though, and we have very similar musical tastes. I trust that if it's good music, it'll be on our show."

His love affair with music made Szmanda a natural in his 2000 movie, "True Vinyl," about a country boy paving his own way to fame as a disk jock.

Szmanda first joined show biz in 1998 when he co-starred in the TV adaptation of the Sandra Bullock film "The Net."

The Manson fan is in real life good friends with Marilyn Manson.

"I've collaborated with Manson a little bit, like work on a music video and stuff," Szmanda said. "I think he's a great guy and I like him as a person.

"I got to know a side of him that most people don't see. He is a mastermind of marketing. He also has a message in what he's doing. If you're familiar with his work, you'll see a consistency. He's got really interesting things to say. He's kind of like a go-to for the younger generation."

Perks

The "CSI" actor is increasingly becoming more recognizable to the public.

"It happens more now than it did a couple of years ago," he said of being recognized in public. "It just continues to build and grow and you get used to it. It's not nearly like Michael Jackson or anything, but it's kinda cool that people have gotten more familiar with my role. I'm just happy they like what I've been doing."

And then he added, "So far, there hasn't been a pay increase, but hopefully that will be down the line."

But being in the No. 1 TV series, according to Szmanda, has brought him other perks, like getting good tables in restaurants on short notice.

"I'm not very good at it," Szmanda said of behaving like a star. "I'm too young. Some people might not believe me unless they've already seen the show."

SHOW TIME

[illegible]

Legends star in Casino concert

ORIGINAL Pilipino Music legends Rico J. Puno, Marco Sison and Hajji Alejandro star in "Hitmakers" at 9 p.m. tomorrow, Friday, at the Coral Ballroom of the Manila Pavilion Hotel.

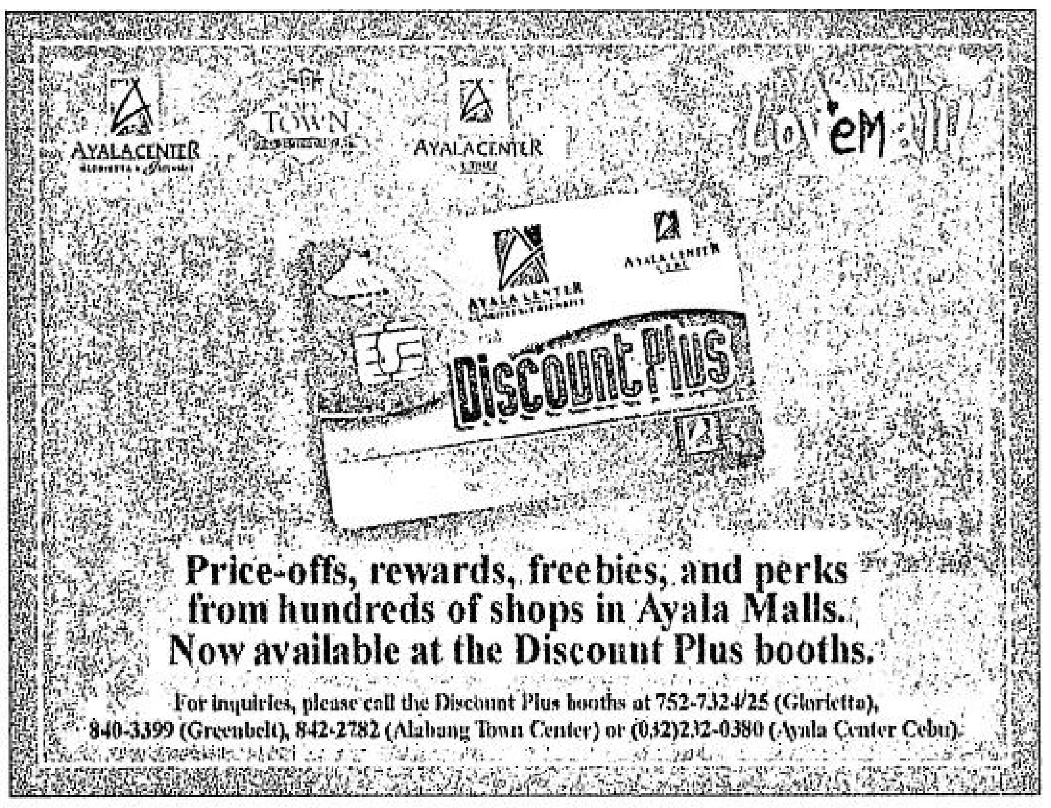
Rico is known for his hits like "Kapalaran" and "Macho Guwapito," as well as for his raw humor.

Marco is etched in the memory for his "My Love Will See You Through," his version of "You'll Never Walk Alone," "It's Just a Make-Believe" and "Always."

Hajji, the original "*kilabot ng mga kolehiyala*," has been in the music scene for 25 years, with hits like "Kay Ganda ng Ating Musika" and "Nakapagtataka."

Tickets are P1,000 each, at all Ticketnet outlets. "Hitmakers" is presented by the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp. and the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office.

Call Casino Filipino-Pavilion, 523-3127, or the Entertainment Dept., 852-7758, or 851-0651, local 2416 and 2447.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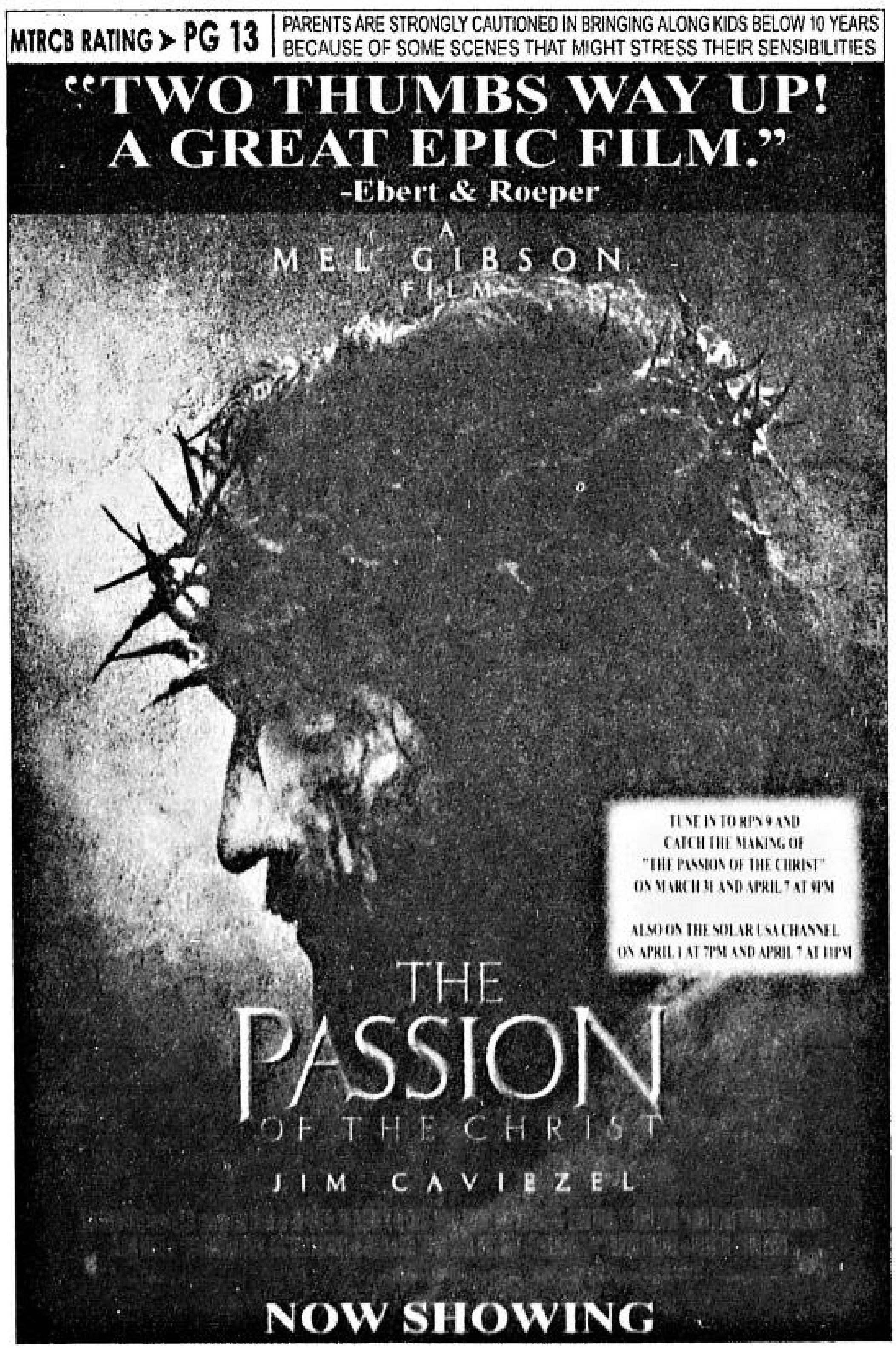
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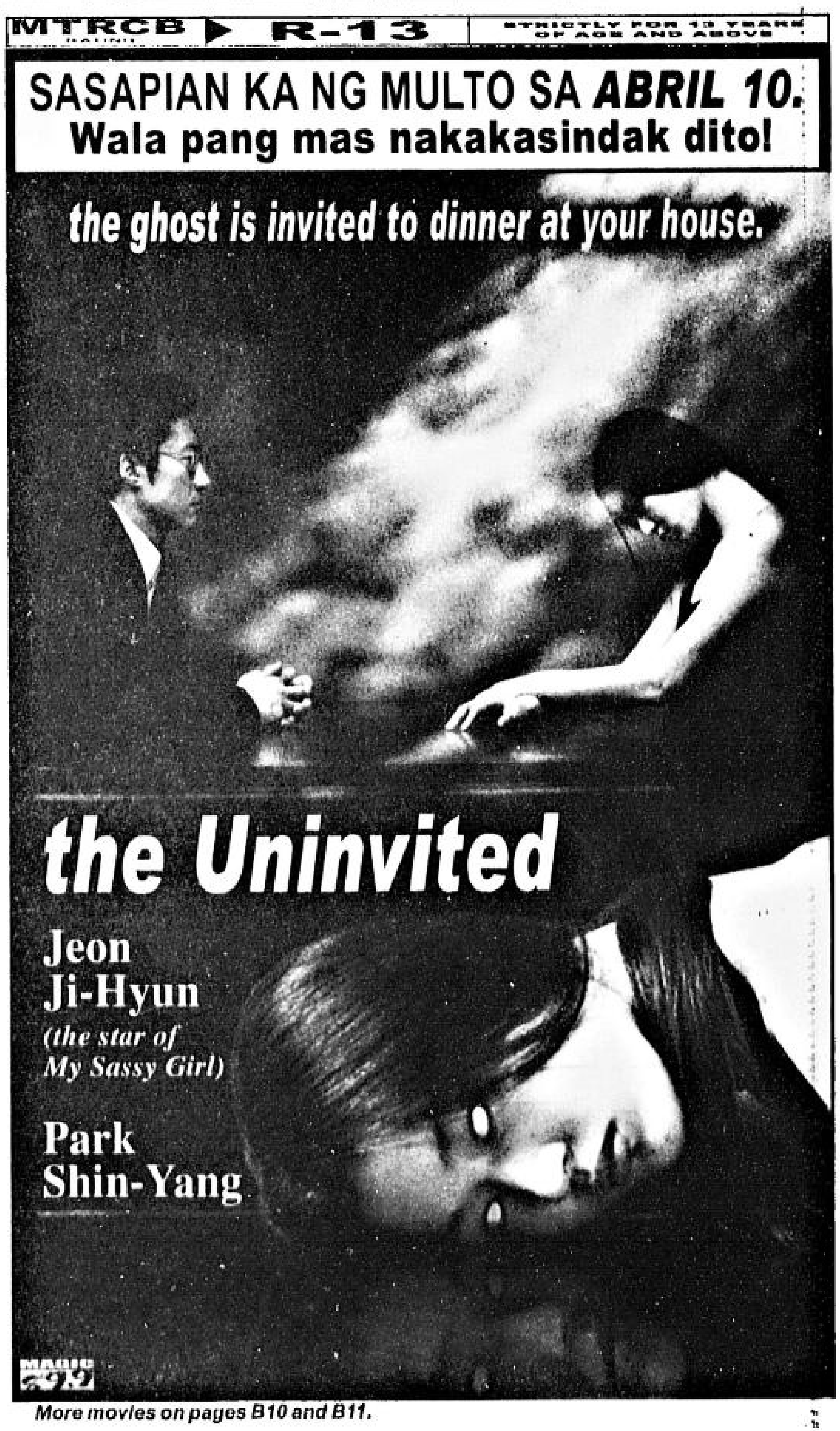
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the Uninvited
Jeon Ji-Hyun
(the star of My Sassy Girl)
Park Shin-Yang
MAGIC

More movies on pages B10 and B11.

ENTERTAINMENT

E-mail: pr_entertainment@inquirer.com.ph

Editor Louie C. Camino

DOJ throws out estafa case against actor Phillip Salvador

By Nini Valera

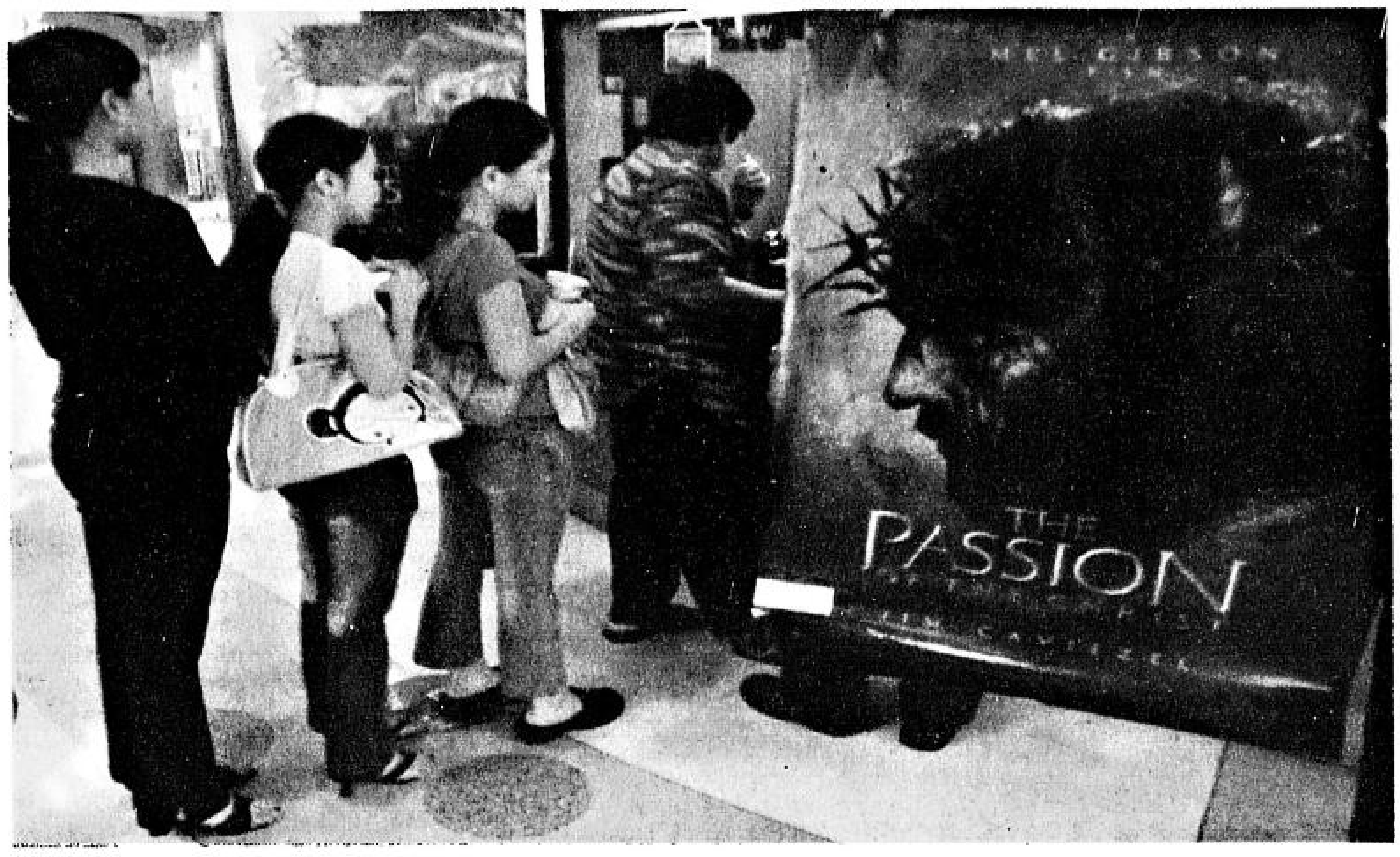
THE DEPARTMENT of Justice has thrown out the estafa case filed before the DOJ against actor Phillip Salvador, his older brother Ramon and several John Does by businesswoman Cristina Castillo Decena, the actor's former lover.

In her ruling dated March 22, State Prosecutor Susan F. Dacanay ordered Decena to "retrieve the records of the complaint and file and/or ventilate the same before the local prosecution office that has jurisdiction to conduct the preliminary investigation of the alleged offense supposedly committed by the Salvadors."

The ruling stemmed from a Motion to Remand to Local Prosecutor filed by the Salvadors last March 16, 2004, asking the DOJ to throw out the case based on Department of Justice Circular No. 62, par. 2, sub-par. 3, which states that the DOJ does not allow direct filing of ordinary criminal complaints with the Office of the Chief State Prosecutor.

The Salvadors accused Decena in the motion of openly boasting that she has the support of her "ninong," Undersecretary Ramon Liwag, when she filed the case against the Salvadors before the DOJ.

State Prosecutor Dacanay found "the grounds alleged in the motion to be meritorious," and granted the Salvadors' motion "in order to avoid undue suspicion on both parties."

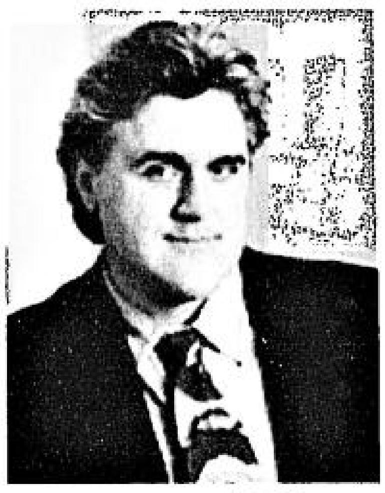


MEL'S PASSION COLLECTS MANNA IN MANILA
As debate about the political correctness of Director Mel Gibson's "The Passion of the Christ" rages around the globe, the controversial movie opens yesterday in Manila where long queues of movie-goers form outside theaters showing the film. Influential bishops of the local Catholic Church in Manila have recommended the film for watching. ERIK ARAZAS

Jay Leno to continue on 'Tonight' show for 5 more years

NBC has rewarded Jay Leno, the ratings leader in late-night television, with a five-year contract extension that will continue his run as host of the network's "Tonight" show until the end of the decade.

The new deal, which NBC is expected to announce Tuesday, guarantees that Leno will continue on "Tonight," the longest-running entertainment show in television history, until he is at least 58. He took over as host in 1992, giving him the second-longest tenure in the program's history. Johnny Carson was the host for 30 years and retired at 65.



LENO: Contract until 2009

Couldn't be happier

Leno said in a telephone interview Monday, "I couldn't be happier about it. It's fun. We've proved we can do the show and now we just go out and do it."

While the move, Leno's current contract until Dec. 31, 2009, locks in NBC's plans for its most important late-night show, and its second most profitable program after the "Today" show, it leaves open questions about its intentions for its other late-night show, "Late Night," and its host, Conan O'Brien. O'Brien, who has a contract with the network that will expire in December 2005, has now followed Leno for 11 years and would have to wait until the start of a new decade before he could hope to succeed to the "Tonight" show—if even then. And the Leno extension could inspire other networks to pursue O'Brien.

Leno said in a telephone interview Monday that he was pleased with the new deal "It's fun. We've proved we can do the show and now we just go out and do it."

Neither NBC nor Leno disclosed the financial terms of the deal, which extends Leno's current contract until Dec. 31, 2009. But Leno did say, "I'm still not making Dave money."

Good raise

Leno's chief late-night rival, David Letterman at CBS, is paid about $31 million a year. Leno was making about $16 million a year under his previous deal. He acknowledged that he did "get a good raise" in this new deal.

But he added, "I don't need the money. If you can't live on what I make there's something wrong with you." Leno, echoing previous statement, said he banks his entire NBC salary and lives off the proceeds of the many stand-up comedy appearances he makes at casinos and corporate events. Asked what he might eventually do someday with all the NBC money he is saving, Leno joked, "I guess when I retire I'll take my wife out to dinner."

Leno said there were no real issues in the negotiation on the new deal. "It seemed pretty simple. NBC came to me and said we'd like to sign you for about five more years and I said fine."

Jeff Zucker, the president of NBC Entertainment, said the deal was done "strictly between me and Jay." Leno has a lawyer but no agent or manager. "We decided to do it now because Jay is now the perennial leader in late night and he only shows signs of getting stronger."

Indeed, Leno has increased both his overall ratings this television season and his lead over Letterman. "Tonight" Leno is averaging 6.2 million viewers a night, up about 7 percent from last year. "Late Show With David Letterman is seen by 4.4 million, up about 5 percent.

Meanwhile, the ABC late-night tandem of "Nightline" and "Jimmy Kimmel Live" are both showing declines. "Nightline" has an average audience of 3.9 million, down 8 percent from last year. "Jimmy Kimmel" is seen by 1.7 million viewers, down 17 percent.

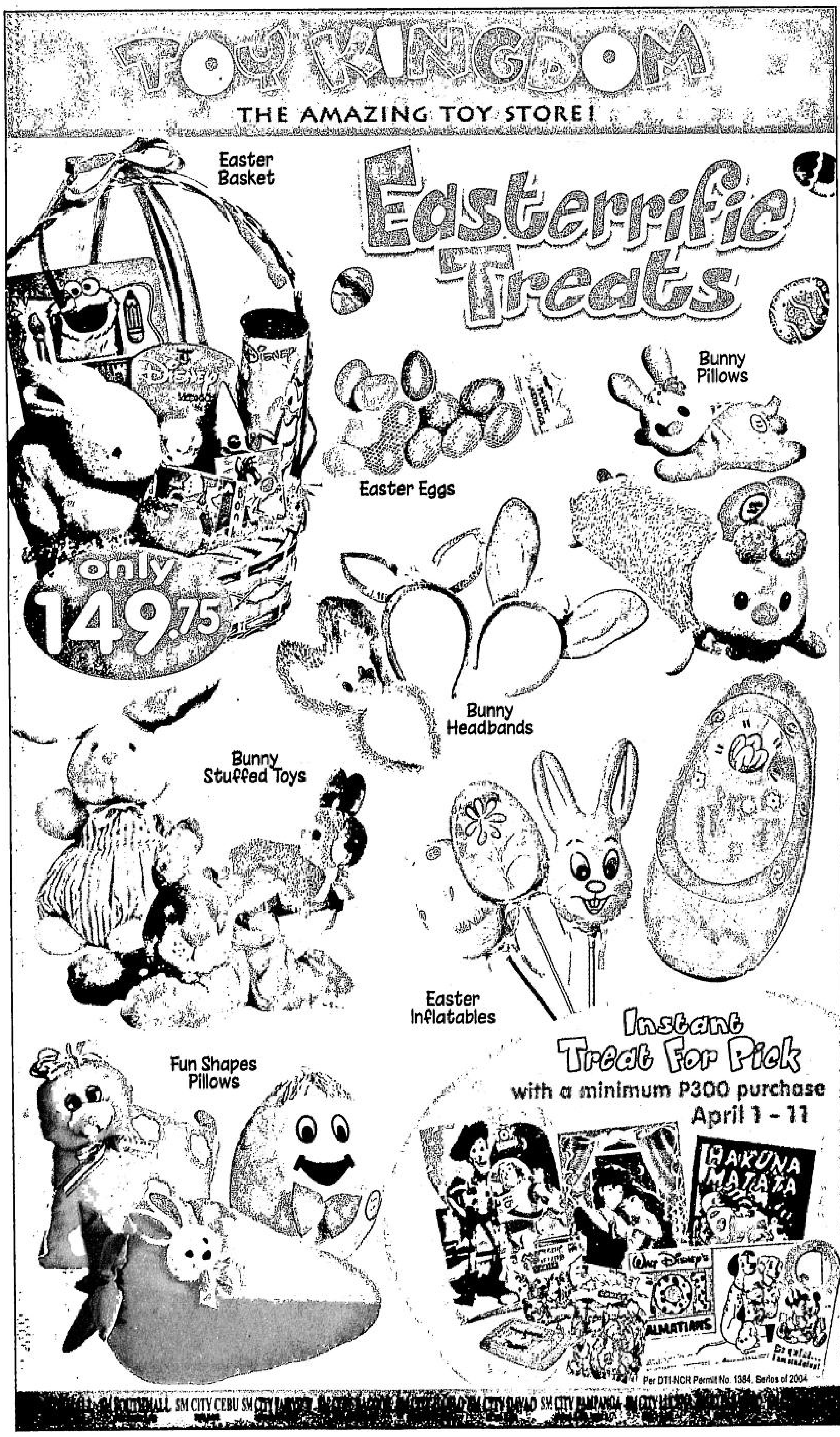
More Emmys for rival

Letterman rarely beats Leno in the ratings, except occasionally on Monday nights, when CBS broadcasts "C.S.I.: Miami," its highest-rated 10 p.m. show. Overall, counting ties between the two, Leno has finished or tied for first 127 of the last 129 nights. Leno has defeated Letterman in the ratings for 89 straight weeks.

But although "Tonight" has dominated the ratings, Letterman's "Late Show" has dominated in more subjective measures. "Late Show" has won more Emmy awards and received more critical acclaim than "Tonight" and Leno.

Leno had praise for his longtime rival, Letterman, saying, "Dave does a good show. I watch his show and it's real good. He does a joke or a bit and sometimes I say, 'I wish we had that.' People seem to have decided who they like and that's fine."

Leno said he is especially happy with the show at the moment. "This is going be one of the nastiest presidential elections ever," Leno said. "Great, fabulous, good for me." He said he has already developed his take on the two candidates. "Bush has no position and Kerry has both positions." *New York Times*



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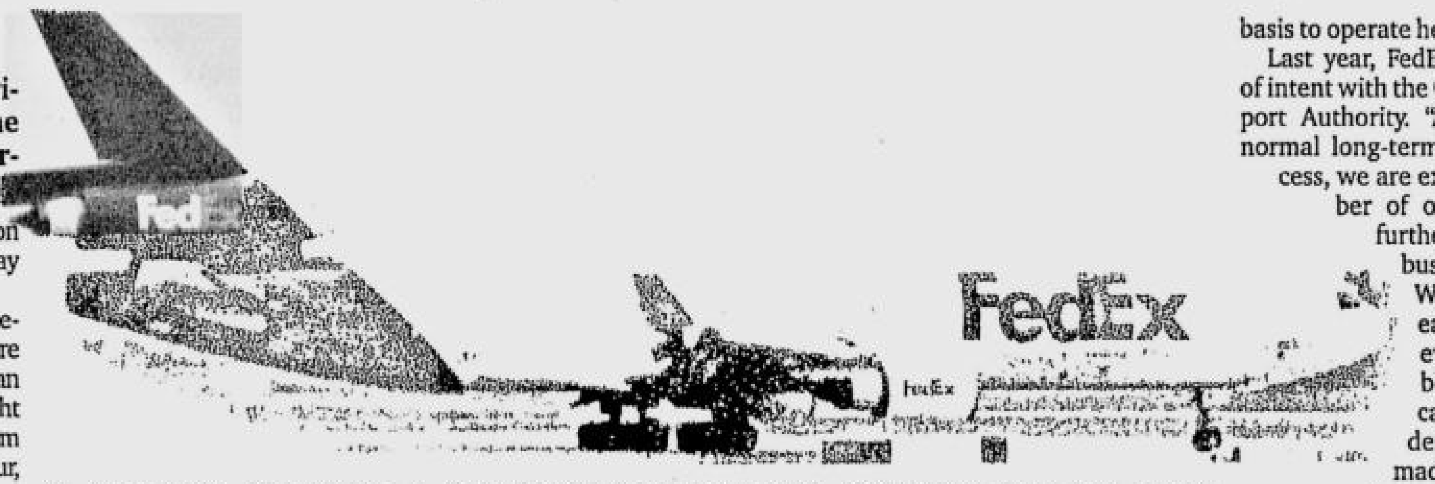
RP wins bid to host $450-M Fedex hub

By Clarissa S. Batino

FEDERAL Express, one of the world's biggest freight carriers, has decided to stay in the Philippines after it chose the country over China as the site of its new $450-million cargo hub in the Asia Pacific region.



Adelberto Yap, president and chief executive officer of the Clark International Airport Corp., yesterday said that he would lead a Philippine team that would sign a 25-year lease agreement with FedEx officials at the company headquarters in Memphis, Tennessee, on April 11.

FedEx will lease a 50-hectare government property at the Clark ecozone where it will relocate its regional hub once its contract with Subic authorities expires in 2007.

Subic had been FedEx's hub over the past eight years. But limitations of Subic in terms of space for expansion prompted the US carrier to consider moving to the 18-billion yuan airport in Guangzhou, China. Two aircraft of FedEx crashed on the Subic waters because of runway miscalculation.

In September 1995, Subic became FedEx's Asia Pacific hub where it can connect with 19 key Asian cities. The facility enables overnight delivery to the US West Coast from Penang, Singapore, Kuala Lumpur, Manila and East Timor.

Yap said that for a smooth transition, FedEx would start building the Clark facility so it could relocate two years before the contract with Subic expires. At the same time, the US freight carrier would scale down gradually its operations in Subic.

"Building the new Clark facility would entail about $450 million in investments from FedEx. I think FedEx chose the Philippines over China because of the ease in doing business in the country aside from our skilled yet cheap labor that could easily adopt to the American way," said the Clark airport president.

Another edge, according to Yap, was the existing 2-runway facility in Clark built by the Americans. The existing runway would allow the American firm to operate from Clark immediately.

"Fedex had to leave Subic because it could no longer expand in the area. Subic is primarily for port terminals," Yap added.

FedEx's local operations have faced a lot of controversies as local airlines accused the US carrier of operating illegally in the Philippines. FedEx and United Parcel Services allegedly operate on the basis of the so-called 7th freedom right that the current air agreement with the US does not provide.

But Yap said that EO 253, which liberalized cargo operations in Subic and Clark, issued by Malacañang in late 2003 would give freight carriers a solid basis to operate here.

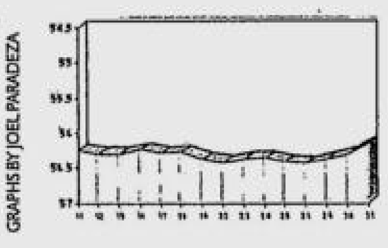
Last year, FedEx signed letter of intent with the Guangzhou Airport Authority. "As part of our normal long-term planning process, we are exploring a number of opportunities to further grow our business in Asia. We are in the very early stages of evaluating possible expansion locations and no decision has been made," FedEx said last year.

FedEx is represented locally by Airfreight 2100 of the Lina Group of Companies.

The US firm handles 3.3 million packages nightly, employs over 200,000 people, and serves more than 200 countries. FedEx planes log mileage equivalent to making 100 trips around the earth in a day.

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES


GRAPHS BY JOEL PARADEZA

MARCH

PESO-DOLLAR RATE

₱ 56.14= $1
As of 5 p.m., March 31, 2004

¥ 103.95 =$ 1
As of 5 p.m., March 31, 2004

GOLD: $417.30-417.80
per ounce Hong Kong, March 30, 2004

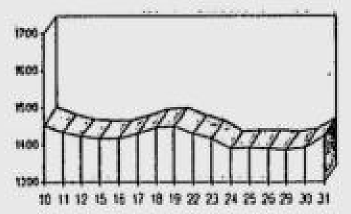
INTEREST RATES

March 31, 2004-MART1 Rates Benchmark Interest Rates	MART1 31-Mar-04	MART1 30-Mar-04
1 Month	8.1583	8.1591
3 Months	8.4583	8.4321
6 Months	9.2286	9.2321
1 Year	9.9617	9.9589
2 Years	10.6567	10.6768
3 Years	11.3911	11.4346
4 Years	11.6596	11.7286
5 Years	12.145	12.1589
7 Years	12.4467	12.4375
10 Years	12.6321	12.6308
20 Years	12.9992	13.0089
25 Years	13.2643	13.2732

SOURCE: MART/BLOOMBERG

STOCK MARKET

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



(See stock market report on Page B2)

Stocks surge 2.03%

SHARE prices closed 2.03 percent higher yesterday to breach resistance at 1,400 points, supported by continued gains on Wall Street and claims that the government had foiled a major terrorist bomb attack in the capital, dealers said.

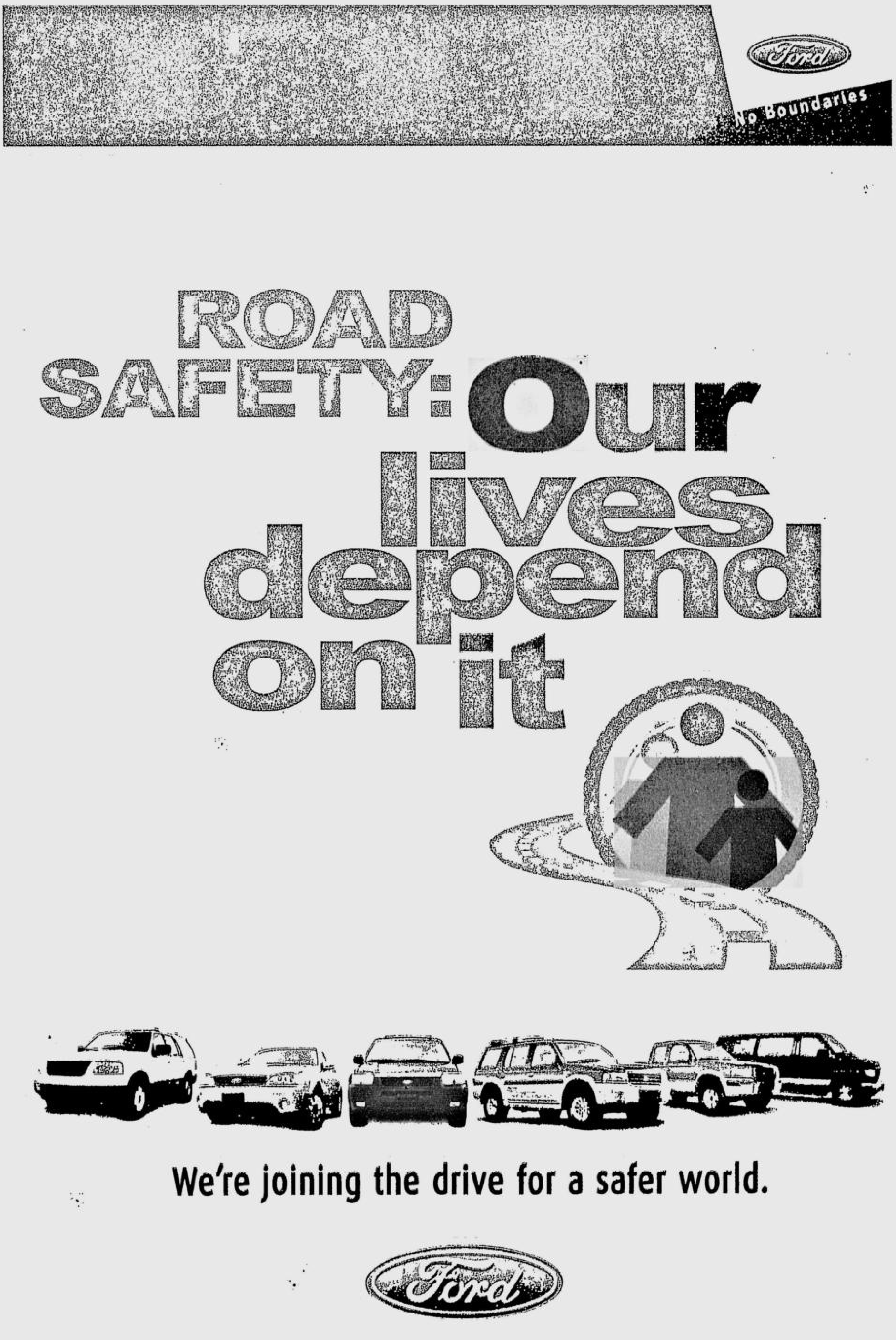
They said, however, that given prevailing political concerns ahead of the May 10 national elections, the upturn may be vulnerable to quick profit taking.

The Philippine Stock Exchange composite index gained 28.31 points at 1,424.33 after trading between 1,396.40 and 1,425.76. Losers led gains 41 to 11, with 37 stocks unchanged.

Volume was 506.5 million shares worth P1.24 billion, reflecting large cross-sales, compared with 144.8 million shares worth P401.6 million on Tuesday.

The all-shares index was up 8.64 points at 936.10 while the commercial-industrial index rose 36.53 to 2,225.50, property added 22.28 to 513.38, mining was up 14.01 to 1,439.39 and oil unchanged at 1.12. The financial sector closed 4.88 higher at 417.27.

Dealers said the peso's continuing recovery against the US dollar provided a positive backdrop as security worries eased after the government said it had foiled a planned bomb attack in Manila with the arrest of four members of the al-Qaida-linked Abu Sayyaf extremist group. *AFP*



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We're joining the drive for a safer world.
Ford

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PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of March 31, 2004)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	17	17.5	17	17.5	275,000
Bank of the Phil. Islands	43	45	43	44	276,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	37.5	38	37.5	38	17,700
Export and Ind. Bank Inc.	0.55	0.56	0.55	0.56	90,000
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	23.25	24	23.25	23.5	365,400
Philippine National Bank	23	23	23	23	20,000
Phil. Savings Bank	27	27	27	27	10,000
Security Bank Corp.	15.25	16.5	15.25	16.5	68,300
Union Bank of the Phil.	24.5	24.5	24.5	24.5	242,500
FINANCIAL SERVICES					
Bankard Inc.	1	1	1	1	10,000
First Abacus Financial	0.69	0.9	0.69	0.9	790,000
Manulife Financial Corp.	2060	2060	2060	2060	180
Sun Life Financial Inc.	1500	1510	1500	1505	3,580
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	19	19.75	19	19.5	50,300
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	0.62	0.65	0.62	0.65	2,350,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	800	820	800	820	40,070
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.037	0.037	0.037	0.037	2,000,000
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	1.7	1.76	1.7	1.72	17,250,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	920	955	920	950	441,700
Philweb Corp.	0.013	0.013	0.012	0.013	11,400,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	17	17	16.5	16.75	138,400
Manila Electric Co. B	25	26	24.25	24.25	2,077,800
Petron Corp.	2.7	2.75	2.65	2.65	5,288,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	0.98	1.04	0.98	1.04	1,640,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.28	1.28	1.28	1.28	20,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	3	3	3	3	600,000
Lorenzo Shipping Corp.	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.18	10,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	130,000
Republic Glass Hldg. Corp	1.62	1.64	1.62	1.64	21,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	3	3	2.95	2.95	24,000
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	28	28.5	28	28.5	25,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	16.5	17	16.5	16.75	218,900
San Miguel Pure Foods A	45	45	45	45	100
RFM Corp.	0.64	0.64	0.64	0.64	10,000
San Miguel Corp. A	56	56.5	56	56.5	62,400
San Miguel Corp. B	69.5	71	69.5	71	80,000
Universal Robina Corp.	6.5	6.5	6.5	6.5	47,000
Vitarich Corp.	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	250,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	50,000
Ayala Corp.	6.1	6.2	6	6.1	51,384,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	2.9	2.95	2.85	2.85	455,000
Ajo Net Holdings Inc.	0.022	0.022	0.02	0.02	300,000
A. Soriano Corp.	1	1	1	1	60,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.005	0.005	0.005	0.005	1,000,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	30,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.48	0.52	0.48	0.5	3,220,000
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.095	0.12	0.095	0.1	600,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.135	0.135	0.135	0.135	400,000
Southeast Asian Cement	0.04	0.045	0.04	0.045	200,000
Ever-Gotesco Resources	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02	500,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	20.5	21	20.25	20.25	320,600
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc	1.78	1.78	1.78	1.78	5,000
Megaworld Corp.	1	1.02	1	1.02	261,000
Mabuhay Holdings Corp.	0.15	0.15	0.15	0.15	10,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.25	0.26	0.25	0.26	4,190,000
SPI Technologies Inc.	13.75	13.75	13.75	13.75	817,200
Wellex Industries, Inc.	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35	50,200,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.22	0.22	0.22	0.22	11,370,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Active Alliance Inc.	0.32	0.32	0.32	0.32	20,000
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	1.12	1.12	1.12	1.12	1,800,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICES					
Belle Corp.	0.5	0.56	0.5	0.56	6,200,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.22	0.22	0.22	0.22	80,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.22	0.22	0.21	0.21	120,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp (Pdr)	18.75	20	18.75	19.75	797,600
PLDT (10% Pref) Series P	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	2,500
PLDT (10% Pref) Series R	10.75	10.75	10.75	10.75	900
PLDT (10% Pref) Series S	10.75	10.75	10.75	10.75	700
PLDT (10% Pref.) Series U	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	8,500
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Y	10.75	10.75	10.75	10.75	800
PLDT 10% Pref Series Aa	10.75	10.75	10.75	10.75	1,000
OTHERS					
Centro Escolar University	6	6	6	6	10,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	5.1	5.3	5.1	5.3	7,679,000
Cityland Development Corp	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	226,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	0.36	0.36	0.36	0.36	20,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.125	0.125	0.125	0.125	50,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.195	0.195	0.19	0.19	1,530,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	0.98	1	0.98	1	6,880,000
Highlands Prime Inc.	2.12	2.18	2.12	2.18	250,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.16	0.16	0.16	0.16	30,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	1.78	1.78	1.78	1.78	5,000
SM Development Corp.	1.16	1.16	1.12	1.16	70,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	5.7	5.9	5.6	5.9	35,382,000
MINING					
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.003	0.003	0.003	0.003	250,000,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.21	0.21	0.21	0.21	10,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.26	0.26	0.25	0.25	1,650,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.0055	0.0055	0.005	0.005	16,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.39	0.39	0.37	0.37	2,320,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	320,000
OIL					
Pacifica	0.007	0.007	0.007	0.007	3,000,000

DISCLOSURES

MABUHAY Vinyl Corp. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on April 29, 3 p.m. at the Makati Sports Club. Only stockholders of record as of March 30 are entitled to notice of and to vote at the meeting.

* * *

SM Development Corp. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on April 23, 4 p.m. at the Manila AB Room of Makati Shangri-La Hotel. Only stockholders of record as of March 24 are entitled to notice of and to vote at the meeting.

* * *

EQUITABLE PCI Bank will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on April 20, 3 p.m. at the Francisco Santiago Hall, Mezzanine Floor of Equitable PCI Bank Tower I, Makati City. Only stockholders of record as of Jan. 15 are entitled to notice of and to vote at the meeting.

* * *

BHI Holdings Inc. moved its annual stockholders' meeting from May 28 to Dec. 20. Remedios Balingit resigned as director of the company. Jalane Christie Tan was elected to replace her.

* * *

ALCORN Gold Resources Corp. moved its annual stockholders' meeting to June 25.

* * *

RIZAL Commercial Banking Corp. disclosed the appointment of Cecilia Padua as senior vice president/group head of operations.

* * *

NEGROS Navigation Co. Inc. moved its annual stockholders' meeting from April 28 to May 26 with record date on April 28.

* * *

RECORD date for **Wellex Industries Inc.'s** annual stockholders' meeting is on April 16.

Compiled by Maricar D. Tolosa, PDI Research

CURRENCIES

March 31, 2004 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.821828	1.000000	56.3570
Japan	Yen	0.007778	0.009464	0.5334
United Kingdom	Pound	1.501151	1.826600	102.9417
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.105419	0.128274	7.2291
Switzerland	Franc	0.641351	0.780396	43.9808
Canada	Dollar	0.629126	0.765521	43.1425
Singapore	Dollar	0.488311	0.594177	33.4860
Australia	Dollar	0.619733	0.754091	42.4983
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.181072	2.653928	149.5674
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.219160	0.266674	15.0289
Brunei	Dollar	0.486865	0.592417	33.3868
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000095	0.000116	0.0065
Thailand	Baht	0.020779	0.025284	1.4249
UAE	Dirham	0.223754	0.272264	15.3440
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.216800	68.5752
Argentina	Peso	0.287352	0.349650	19.7052
Brazil	Real	0.281930	0.343053	19.3334
Denmark	Kroner	0.134320	0.163441	9.2110
India	Rupee	0.018691	0.022743	1.2817
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.216299	0.263193	14.8328
Mexico	New Peso	0.073476	0.089405	5.0386
New Zealand	Dollar	0.539930	0.656987	37.0258
Norway	Kroner	0.118957	0.144747	8.1575
Pakistan	Rupee	0.014362	0.017476	0.9849
South Africa	Rand	0.130242	0.158479	8.9314
Korea	Won	0.000713	0.000867	0.0489
Sweden	Kroner	0.107927	0.131325	7.4011
Syria	Pound	0.018627	0.022665	1.2773
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.024889	0.030285	1.7068
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.000429	0.000522	0.0294

Show-off force

BREAKTIME

Conrado R. Banal III

WHAT do you know, in no time at all—before we could even build a single unit of socialized housing—there's a big political show of force again, and the elections are here.

This is as good a time as any for this cute administration of Gloriaetta to show the world that it just loves to work—that it has nothing to do with politics, honest.

Doing everything within its power to show off as the campaign builds up, this cute administration is forming another one of those so-called task forces.

The latest task force is called the national anti-smuggling task force, or Nastf, patterned after Naktf, which takes care of kidnapping ... I mean, takes care of kidnappers ... fights kidnappers pala! (I still want to see my grandchildren, okay?)

Now why did we not think of a task force approach these past decades? It is the only way to solve the age-old problem of smuggling once and for all, really.

You see, business has been drowning in foreign-made goods being sold in the country. Business people have been complaining that a lot of it has been smuggled.

And we come up with the bright idea of a sure-shot no-fail solution only now, which is election time? Coincidence? Where were our best and brightest all this time?

* * *

NOW that we have solved the big-time smuggling problem with one brilliant move, one question remains: Can the Nastf really go after the big-time smugglers?

Everybody in the Chinese-Filipino community knows who they are. Their identities are not top secret. Believe me, their names even come up in the highest places in the land.

Noting that the flood of imports are killing off local businesses, the Federation of Filipino Chinese Chambers of Commerce and Industry even campaigned for local goods.

Yet through all the decades, from the time of Gloriaetta's father to the time of Gloriaetta's husband, este, administration, smuggling remains a lucrative ... well, racket.

If the Bureau of Customs could not touch all those big-time smugglers, what assurance do business people have that, this time, truthfully, the Nastf can?

* * *

ONE of the notorious smugglers is a Chinese-Filipino business person—the same guy who was said to be close to the man named Band ... Wrist Band.

Talked about all the time as one of the biggest of big-time smugglers, our hero was even known as an Erap crony even way back when the man was still Vice Erap.

At the time, our idol was said to operate—with impunity, of course—in lahar country, the same jueteng territory of Bong this or Bong that.

If the new task force, this Nastf, is looking for a big way to announce its coming, I think that running after our idol, the smuggling hero, would not be a bad idea.

One of my contacts at the Bureau of Customs said that the bureau could actually quantify how much this cute administration is losing in taxes and duties to our idol.

Last year alone, with his furious importation of a Spanish brandy, the savings our hero on duties and taxes amounted to almost P200 million.

That's roughly two thousand units of socialized housing that can shelter 10,000 people.

* * *

BASED on news reports citing customs bureau insiders, in the second half of last year, our hero brought into the country a total of 195 containers of brandy.

The insiders even had a breakdown of the shipment—it was divided into 117 containers in 20-foot vans, and 78 containers in 40-foot vans.

BREAKTIME/ B3

PHILIPPINE ASSOCIATION OF MEDICAL TECHNOLOGISTS, INC.

MESSAGES

Republic of the Philippines
Manila

MALACAÑAN PALACE

MESSAGE

My sincerest felicitations to all members of the Philippine Association of Medical Technologists (PAMET) - Bicol Chapter on the occasion of your 9th National Mid-Year Convention.

Your theme "Medical Technology in Bicol: Responsive to the Needs of the Time" inevitably involves new scientific approaches and modern technology in health care. I believe that this event will give you pause to look at the state of your profession and see the means of upgrading it for the benefit of your patients. It is hoped that through this channel, our country will become a major and competitive player in the domestic as well as international arena of medical technology.

I commend you for your exemplary and unwavering efforts to enhance your practice. I enjoin you to keep up with your hopes and dreams for the country, at the same time to ensure for our people a healthy and a more productive life. Let us all unite to achieve a strong Philippine Republic, one that is capable of providing for our well being and general welfare.

Congratulations and Mabuhay kayong lahat!

(Sgd.) GLORIA MACAPAGAL - ARROYO
President

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Health

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

MESSAGE

My warmest greetings to the officers and members of the Philippine Association of Medical Technologists, Inc. (PAMET) - Integrated Bicol Chapter on the holding of their 9th National Mid-Year Convention with theme "Medical Technology in Bicol - Responsive to the Needs of the Time".

The Department of Health commends the members of PAMET - Albay Chapter for their dedication and support to the government's efforts to provide accessible, quality and affordable health care to all. Your success manifests in the difference you make in the lives of our countrymen especially in your community.

I hope that your accomplishments will encourage others to continue working vigorously for a better and more improved health care system and a more progressive service towards the achievement of a strong and healthy republic.

I commend you for your unwavering dedication to unselfishly serve our people. May this occasion inspire you to further strengthen your commitment to provide quality health care and inspire others to continue to contribute towards improving the quality of life of our people.

Congratulations. Mabuhay kayong lahat!

(Sgd.) MANUEL M. DAYRIT MD, MSc
Secretary of Health

9th NATIONAL MID-YEAR CONVENTION

April 1-3, 2004 · Albay Astrodome, Legazpi City
Host : Integrated Bicol Chapter – Spearheaded by Albay Chapter

Theme: " Medical Technology in Bicol – Responsive to the Needs of the Time."

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MESSAGES

Philippine Association of Medical Technologists, Inc.
Manila City

MESSAGE

In behalf of the Board of Directors of PAMET National, I extend my heartfelt felicitations to the Officers and members of PAMET Integrated Bicol Chapter for ably organizing and hosting the 9th National Mid-Year Convention amidst the majestic splendor of Mayon Volcano.

The theme "Medical Technology in Bicol: Responsive to the Needs of the Time" is reflective of an association that renders quality health care service to our fellowmen. The nature of our work as medical technologists is meant to make our world a healthier place to live in for no matter where we are, for as long as we do our job far and beyond what is expected of us, then we are contributing towards a healthier nation.

I am sure we will all be able to enhance our knowledge and skills with the convention's scientific program as we enjoy your warm hospitality and savor the spicy foods that Bicol is well known for.

Let us join hands in making this 9th Mid-Year Convention a successful and enjoyable assembly of kindred medical technologists.

(Sgd.) DR. SHIRLEY F. FABIAN-CRUZADA
President

Republic of the Philippines
PROVINCE OF ALBAY
Legazpi City

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

MESSAGE

It is with deepest pleasure that I wish to greet the organizers and all participants of the 9th Mid-Year Convention of the Philippine Association of Medical Technologists (PAMET), Inc. at the Albay Astrodome, Legazpi City on April 1-3, 2004.

I also take this opportunity to welcome all PAMET delegates and guests to the Province of Albay and to invite you all to participate and witness the different events during our forthcoming annual Magayon Festival in May.

Let the PAMET Convention with its theme "Medical Technology in Bicol: Responsive to the Needs of the Time" serve to renew your zeal and vigor as partners of our government in pursuing more innovative ways and means that can effectively contribute to the well being of our people, especially in terms of health and rehabilitation.

Welcome to Albay. Congratulations!

(Sgd.) AL FRANCIS C. BICHARA
Governor, Albay

SCIENTIFIC PROGRAM

DAY 1 (APRIL 1, 2004, THURSDAY)

8:00 AM 10:00 AM Registration - Albay Astrodome Lobby
10.00 AM 11:30 AM Opening Ceremonies
11:30 AM - 1:00 PM Fellowship Lunch
1:00 AM - 1:30 PM Formal Opening of MEDTEC EXPO 2004
1:30 PM 2:00 PM Viewing of Exhibits
2:00 PM - 4:30 PM Scientific Program A

Plenary Session I
"Core Values & Competencies"
Speaker : Jesse Francis N. Rebustillo
Moderator : Nelly B. Buendia

Symposium I
"SARS and Influenza – Pandemic Threat"
Speaker : Fem Julia E. Paladin, Ph.D.
Moderator : Eunice R. Barcena

6:00 PM – 10:00 PM "SAFARI NIGHT" – Albay Parks & Wildlife
Production Number - BU Dance Troupe
Chapters Presentations
Special Awards
Raffle

DAY 2 (APRIL 2, 2004, FRIDAY)

8.00 A.M. 4:00 P.M. Tour: On to Mayon
5.30 P.M. Chapters Meeting

DAY 3 (APRIL 3, 2004, SATURDAY)

8:00 AM – 10:00 AM Scientific Program B
Symposium II
"Paragonimiasis, A Philippine Emerging Health Concern. The Sorsogon Experience"
Speaker : Dr. Napoleon L Arevalo
Moderator : Ludy Labayo

Plenary Session II
"Role of Medical Technologists in Disease Surveillance"
Speaker : Dr. Ferchito L. Avelino
Moderator : Ruby Pabericio

10:00 AM – 1:00 PM Closing Ceremonies
Farewell Lunch
2:00 P.M. Exploring Legazpi City

Republic of the Philippines
City of Legazpi

OFFICE OF THE CITY MAYOR

MESSAGE

Greetings!

It is with great pride and honor that I welcome the delegates of the 9th PAMET National Mid-Year Convention. We take it as another milestone that our place was chosen as the venue for the convention with a very inspiring theme "Medical Technology in Bicol: Responsive to the Needs of the Time". Indeed the Bicol Region, with its almost 300 medical technologists and 169 clinical laboratories has gone a long way in providing service to our community responsive to the needs of the time. Our region is proud to have laboratories with the most automated chemistry, hematology and immunology analyzers, hence providing modern diagnostic modalities to our people thus increasing accuracy in the diagnosis of diseases followed by more reliable treatment.

We the Legazpeños warmly welcome the participants to the convention. May you enjoy the warmth of our hospitality through our "hot" Bicol Express dish and the inspiration of seeing the beauty of the perfect coned Mayon volcano minus its eruption.

Explosive cheers to all of you!

(Sgd.) NOEL E. ROSAL
City Mayor, Legazpi City

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

IMF concerned over RP's ballooning debt, deficit

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE INTERNATIONAL Monetary Fund yesterday took note of the Philippines' weak points arising from large fiscal deficits, heavy debt burden, uncertain investment climate and slow reforms in the power and banking sectors.

The IMF—which maintained a 4.5 percent domestic growth outlook for the country this year—also welcomed the government's intention to remain in the Fund's Post-Program Monitoring.

The IMF said "close consultation" is important until the government's fiscal position is strengthened.

In a report released by the IMF executive board following the conclusion of the 2003 Article IV consultations (whereby the Fund holds bilateral discussions with member-countries every year), the Philippines was urged to address vulnerable areas even as its macroeconomic performance had been favorable in recent years.

Without comprehensive reforms, the Fund warned that the country's situation would worsen.

It underscored the urgent need for authorities to implement the reforms in order to "set the economy on a high and sustainable growth trajectory, reduce the still pervasive poverty, and improve debt sustainability and the economy's resilience to adverse shocks."

The report said IMF directors were concerned about the high levels of public sector deficit and debt and welcomed government's efforts to reduce the deficit in 2003. They commended the strengthening of tax administration, which had helped stop the declining trend in the revenue-to-GDP (gross domestic product) ratio.

The directors endorsed the recent procurement reform, and encouraged further progress in strengthening expenditure management.

For 2004, the IMF recommended a more ambitious reduction in the deficit—greater than that contemplated in the draft budget. They noted that this would bolster the credibility of the government's fiscal strategy. They also called for fast fiscal consolidation over the medium term—faster than what the authorities had planned.

They stressed that fundamental revenue measures were needed for fiscal consolidation. In particular, the government was urged to increase and index excise taxes on cigarettes and alcohol, raise petroleum excises and the value-added tax rate, and rationalize and limit tax incentives. The authorities were also advised to resist proposals for a tax amnesty.

The IMF directors highlighted the need to reform the power sector, noting that low power rates were contributing to the sharp deterioration of the financial condition of the National Power Corp. They urged the authorities to raise the rates and implement a universal charge, while attempting to shield the poor from the burden of higher prices.

Also, the directors urged the authorities to resist trade protectionist pressure, in view of their past success in rapidly liberalizing trade.

"They saw the recent increases in import tariffs as providing a poor substitute for critical structural reforms, and urged the authorities to reverse them soon," it said.

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Ginebra San Miguel named 'outstanding gin'

THE "OUTSTANDING Brand of Gin" citation has been conferred on Ginebra San Miguel during the Parangal ng Bayan Foundation Inc.'s 19th Annual National Consumers Excellence Awards.

The foundation, which celebrates March as "National Achiever's Month," pays tribute to companies, manufacturers and products that have "made excellent contributions in shaping the well-being of the Philippine market."

Ginebra San Miguel was cited for its "workmanship, quality and affordability, performance and impact on users, and brand market share and operation."

"Your product has shown commendable satisfaction to consumers," Parangal ng Bayan Foundation chair Vickie Dizon said in a letter to Ginebra San Miguel Inc.

The "Outstanding Brand of Gin" award was conferred yesterday at the Carlos P. Romulo Auditorium of RCBC Plaza in Makati.

In a December 2003 report of a US-based research firm Impact Databank, Ginebra San Miguel came out as the world's No. 1 gin brand.

It topped a list of 10 global brands, selling some 27.4 million cases in 2002—five times that of the second-leading brand.

Breaktime

From page B2

Our hero, based on the news reports, paid taxes and duties amounting to only P27 million max. The amount was based on official bureau records.

According to insiders, the shipment should have been levied excise taxes of P700,000 per 20-foot container, and P1.4 million per 40-foot container.

That would amount to ... let's see ... well, a lot of money for socialized housing. Instead, our hero paid only P100,000 for every container—FLAT. Meaning, fixed!

* * *

THERE, ladies and gentlemen, I am not kidding. Somebody has already come up with the technology to make the liquor importation racket fully systematic.

There, you pay a pittance to the government for all that importation of brandy which could make every Filipino seaman drunk from here to the next life.

Our hero could smuggle, este "import" *pala*, about three million bottles of Spanish brandy in six months. That's systematic!

All he did was to keep the items in a warehouse somewhere in lahar country for safekeeping. Meaning, hidden from the prying eyes of the public.

* * *

IT has become so systematic, somebody could get away with sneaking into the local market some three million bottles of the locally popular Spanish brand of brandy.

The question in Binondo is, who is behind our idol, now that he can no longer cling to the underwear of Wrist Band?

With such a big scale operation, nobody can believe that our hero does not enjoy somebody's protection, both in and outside the customs bureau, preferably "outside."

It is the only plausible explanation, even to wide-eyed envious people in Binondo, who cannot figure out how not even a single shipment of his was ever caught.

To top it all, just recently, some 19 containers of imported chickens, worth millions and millions disappeared in the port in Batangas.

What else—the same wonderful lovable guy was said to have performed the disappearing act. Somebody up there must love him. Or he is well protected.

* * *

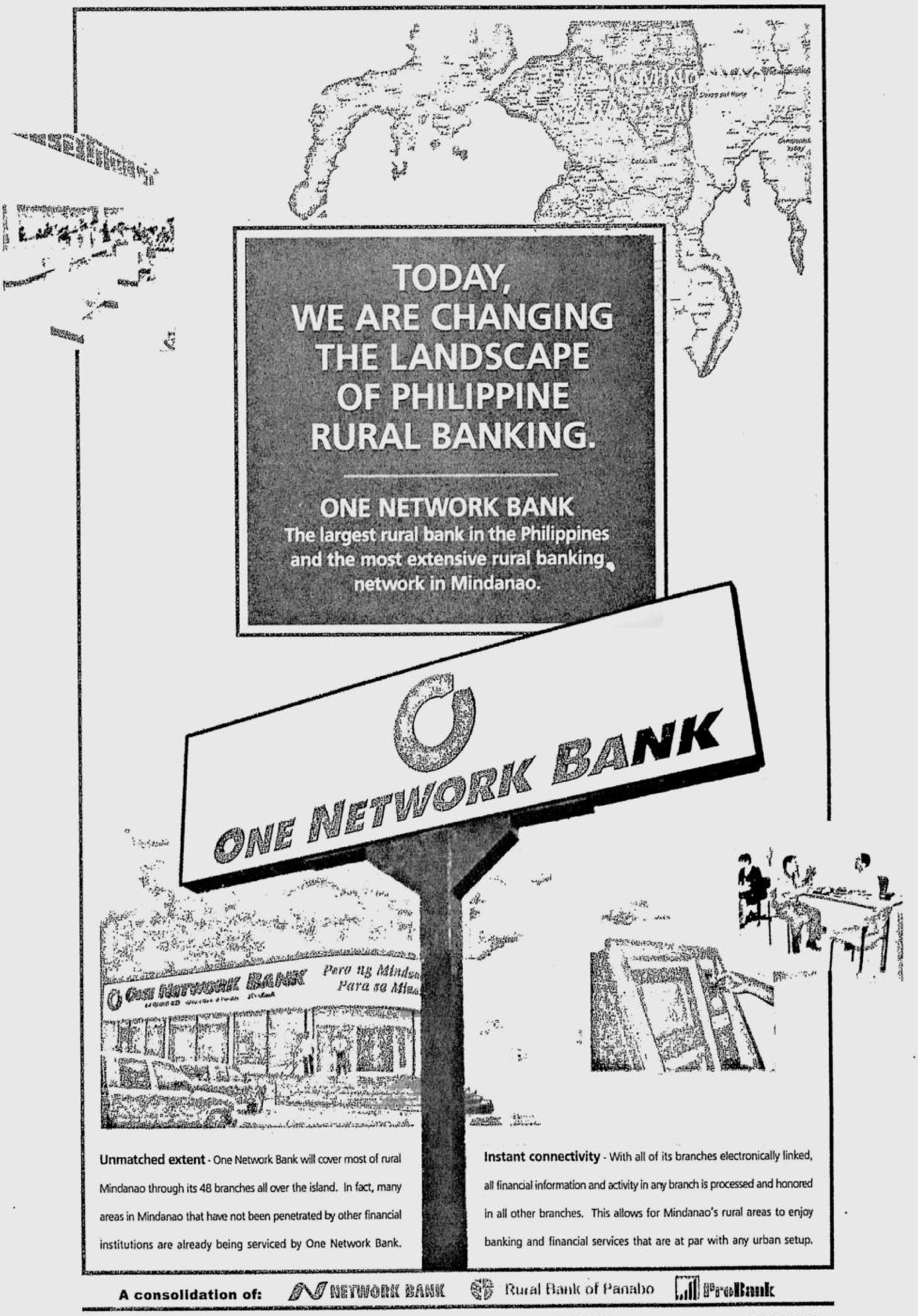
NOT all the bigtime smugglers, of course, enjoy the same privileges as our hero. Very few could do what he was able to accomplish under this cute administration.

That's why I wonder about Nastf, whether or not it can muster the force to break smuggling syndicates.

To head Nastf is former Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes. And how imposing and powerful is this man at this time?

You see, he is one of the numerous Cabinet members in this cute administration who do not have their own department. This means, they don't actually have people working for them.

And so, is it all just for show, or showing off, or whatever?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PUBLIC NOTICES

LEGAL NOTICE

NOTICE is hereby given that the estate of the late MIGUEL Z. BERBA has been extrajudicially settled by his heirs as per Deed of Extrajudicial Settlement identified as Doc No. 176, Page No 37, Book No. 2, Series of 2002 of Notary Public Rodel R. Nayve.
(PDI-April 1, 8 & 15, 2004)

PUBLIC NOTICES

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is given that an extra-judicial settlement of the estate of the deceased **FELIPE G. GUTIERREZ** was executed by his heirs and acknowledged before Consul J. Eduardo Malaya of the Consulate General of the Philippines, S.F. CA USA on January 9, 2004. Per Service No. 0200, OR No. 0501, Doc. No. 0200, Book XXV, Page No. 0006, Series of 2004.
(PDI-March 18, 25 & April 1, 2004)

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late LEONORA BLANCO-FUENTES & ANDRES O. FUENTES, who died in Angono, Rizal on March 5, 1995 & January 1, 1990 respectively, has been extrajudicially settled by their heirs as per Doc. 404, Page 91, Book I, Series of 2004 of Notary Public Baltazar Abasolo of Rizal. (PDI-Mar. 25, Apr. 1, & 8 2004)

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late FORTUNATO BARCELONA & MARIA AYSON-BARCELONA was extrajudicially settled among his her heirs as per Doc.436, Page.89, Book.48 Series of 2004 under Notary Public Evaristo B. Urbina of QC.
(PDI- 3/18, 25 & 4/1, 2004)

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late **HONORIO L. CARLOS** has been extrajudicially settled among his heirs as per Doc. No. 128, Page No. 27, Book No. I, Series of 2004 by Notary Public Atty. Manuel N. Camacho of Manila.
(PDI-March 18, 25 & April 1, 2004)

NOTICE OF LOSS

Notice is given that Wack Wack Golf & Country Club Stock Cert. No. 559 issued to Benjamin S. Abalos, Sr. have been lost. If no contest is received new certificate will be issued. (PDI 4/ 1, 8 & 15, 2004)

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We want highly motivated **BUSINESS LEADERS** and **DISTRIBUTORS** to be a part of this growing company. The company's big successes in Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and recently opened market in Japan, Singapore and Thailand are a result of the company's distributor support and products that work. Log on to www.americanlongevity.net to look at the company's profile and call Ted Soriano at **0918-412-1591** or **7221563.**

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
BUREAU OF IMMIGRATION
Clark Special Economic Zone
Clarkfield, Pampanga
Tel. No. (045) 599-9000 loc. 402 or (045) 599-4402

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

Please be informed that the following official receipts were lost in our office at OSAC-CDC, Clark Special Economic Zone on March 25, 2004.

Serial Numbers:

10570965
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Any transaction involving the issuance of the lost official receipts is deemed invalid.

If encountered, kindly report immediately to the undersigned or to any nearest immigration office

(Sgd.) SYLVIA D. ESTOESTA
Immigration Officer I

(PDI – April 1, 2004)

FINAL INVITATION TO UNDERTAKE THE PROPOSED ISABEL, LEYTE, RECLAMATION PROJECT, PROVINCE OF LEYTE, REGION VIII, UNDER A JOINT VENTURE ARRANGEMENT

The Municipality of Isabel, Leyte (Philippines) is inviting interested parties to submit application to apply for **eligibility**, and **subsequents to bid** of Pre-qualified to undertake the reclamation and development of about **ONE HUNDRED TWENTY EIGHT (128)** hectares of foreshore and **offshore areas** (Project) along Dupong Bay, Isabel, Leyte intended to mixed use development such as commercial, industrial, residential among others.

The project shall be undertaken on a joint venture arrangement with the Municipality whereby the Proponent/Developer shall advance all costs of reclamation and development and shall be paid in the form of land rental or land to be reclaimed

The Proponent/Developer must show proof of its legal, technical and financial capability and must submit the following pre-qualification documents attached to its letter of intent addressed to the Municipality to undertake the project.

1. *Non-Refundable Filing Fee in the amount of Php22,000.00 inclusive of VAT payable to the Municipality in the form of cash, manager's check or cashier's check,*
2. *Original Copy of SEC Certification of Good Standing Record,*
3. *Complete set of legal documents of the organization, ie, company Profile or Principal Proponent and each firm and members if consortium, SEC Registration, Articles of Incorporation & By-laws, and Company Profile, Business Registration and License Papers,*
4. *Audited Financial Statements for the last three (3) years (balance sheets and income statement) of Principal Proponent duly filed/stamped received by BIR,*
5. *Affidavit of undertaking that if awarded the contract to provide financing for the project estimated to be not less than Php1.587 Billion.*
6. *Credit lines in specific amount issued and certified by reputable banks and financing institutions.*

All qualified Proponent(s)/Developer(s) shall be advised to submit letters of Intent and its project feasibility study.

Deadline for submission of letters of Intent to undertake the project including required attachment shall be on **May 18, 2004** at 10:00 A.M. at the Office of the Mayor, Isabel, Leyte, Tel. No. (053) 337-2083.

(Sgd.) HON. ROBERTO P. FUENTES, JR.
Municipal Mayor

(PDI–April 1, 2 & 3, 2004)

AUCTION

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MISCELLANEOUS - A Qty. Of Electronic Spares; A Qty of Asstd. Steel/Aluminium/ Stainless Steel Components; Asstd. Hand/Cutting Tools; Asstd. Machine Parts & Accessories; Asstd. Electric Motors; Aluminium Cassette Carriers; Communication Cables; Asstd. Valves; Asstd. Cylinders, etc.

At.: 1321 Apolinario St., Bangkal, Makati, Philippines
On View: Fri. 2nd April 2004 - 1:00pm to 5:00pm &
morning of sale day (Sat. 3rd April 2004 starting at 8:00am to 10:00am)
Refundable Deposit: Php50,000 (upon registration)
Please bring valid ID to be presented during registration

PLEASE NOTE: NO SLIPPERS/SANDALS, NO SLEEVELESS SHIRTS, NO SHORTS, NO SMOKING, NO VIDEO CAMERA, NO CHILDREN - WILL BE ALLOWED ON THE AUCTION PREMISES
PLEASE CONTACT THE AUCTIONEERS OFFICE FOR MORE DETAILS

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Tel No.: +(63-2) 832-2910 * 11 Fax No.: +(63-2) 831-[illegible]
E-mail:manila@henrybutcher.com
Website: www.henrybutcher.com/www.goindustry.com

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE
BUREAU OF INTERNAL REVENUE
Quezon City

March 24, 2004

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) invites interested parties to apply for eligibility and to bid for the following:

I.	Name of Project	:	Janitorial Service
	Location of the Project	:	BIR National Office RR 5 - Valenzuela RR 6 - Manila RR 7 - Quezon City RR 8 - Makati City RDC - Central Luzon (Q.C.) BIR Escolta Bldg. (Manila)
	Contract Duration	:	June 1 to December 31, 2004
	Approved Budget	:	P12,616,985.15
	Source of Funding	:	BIR's Appropriations
II.	Name of Project	:	Pest Control Service
	Location of the Project	:	BIR National Office
	Contract Duration	:	June 1 to December 31, 2004
	Approved Budget	:	P396,875.00
	Source of Funding	:	BIR's Appropriations

All interested parties may get the bidding documents from the BAC Secretariat, c/o Procurement Division at Room 605, 6th Floor, BIR-NOB, Diliman, Quezon City starting March 29, 2004, upon payment of non-refundable fee of:

Project No. I - P 2,500.00
Project No. II - P 500.00

A Pre-Bid Conference will be held on **April 12, 2004 at 9:00 a.m. at the 3/F Floor, Executive Conference Room, BIR-NOB, Diliman, Quezon City.**

Deadline for the submission and opening of eligibility requirements, technical and financial proposals shall be on **April 26, 2004 at 9:00 a.m. at the 3/F Floor, Executive Conference Room, BIR-NOB, Diliman, Quezon City**, and followed by the opening of the bids.

The criteria to be used by the BIR in the following: (a) eligibility check of prospective bidders; (b) examination and evaluation of bids; and (c) postqualification, shall be on a non-discretionary "pass/fail" basis.

The BIR assumes no obligation whatsoever to compensate or indemnify the bidders for any loss that they may incur in the preparation of their bid. The BIR also reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive any of the required formality therein and accept the bids most advantageous to the government.

For particulars, please inquire from the BAC Secretariat, thru the Chief, Procurement Division at Room 605, 6th Floor, BIR-NOB, Diliman, Quezon City or call telephone nos 926-5547/926-5538 and telefax no. 928-2026 (fax), or e-mail us at nelly.ibo@bir.gov.ph until **April 23, 2004.**

(Sgd.) **MILAGROS V. REGALADO**
Assistant Commissioner - Legal Service
Chairman, Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI - April 1, 2004)

ISABELA-1 ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.
Victoria, Alicia, Isabela
Tel. No. (078) 662-7103, 662-7983, 662-7810
Fax No. (078) - 6627103
-6627917

INVITATION TO SUBMIT BID PROPOSAL

Isabela-1 Electric Cooperative, Inc., wishes to invite interested supplier to submit bid proposal for a commodity loan as follows:

a. Supply, installation and commissioning of 10 MVA substation including metering and protection equipments but excluding site development.
b. Supply, construction and commissioning of 24 kilometers 69 KV lines along the national road between Santiago City and Cabatuan, Isabela.

Interested parties may secure bid proposal documents for a commodity loan at the Management Internal Auditing Department. Furthermore, please consider the following to supplement your best proposal:

a) Type of loan – Commodity loan
b) Terms of payment:
  Down payment – 10% of offered price
  Balance is payable within 5 years
c) First amortization starts upon commissioning

The schedule of activities are as follows:

	PARTICULARS		DATE/TIME
A)	1. Submission of qualification requirements	–	April 5, 2004
	2. Issuance of notice to all qualified and disqualified suppliers	–	April 6, 2004
B)	Issuance of Documents to qualified suppliers for the commodity loan and payment of filing fee	–	April 6-12, 2004
C)	Submission of bid proposals	–	April 19, 2004
D)	Evaluation of submitted bid proposals	–	April 20, 2004
E)	Awarding to supplier with best proposal	–	April 21, 2004

The Checklist of qualification requirements are the following:

1. Non-refundable filing fee in the amount of THREE THOUSAND PESOS ONLY (P3,000.00) in the form of cash.
2. Supplier with National Electrification Administration accreditation.
3. Complete set of legal documents of the company, i.e., SEC registration, Articles of Inc. and By-laws, and Company Profile Business registration and license papers.
4. Audited Financial Statements (Balance Sheet and Income Statement) duly filed stamped received by BIR.
5. If represented by an agent of the firm, he/she must have a letter from the President Manager/Owner that he/she is the authorized representative.

The ISELCO-1 reserves the right to reject any or all bids without offering any reason waive any defect thereon and make an award to the bidder whose proposal is most advantageous to the coop (ISELCO-1). The ISELCO-1 likewise assumes no obligation for whatever losses that may be incurred by the bidders in the preparation of the bids, nor does it guarantee that the award shall be made.

(Sgd.) **ENGR. VIRGILIO L. MONTANO**
TSD Manager/Management Team Leader

(PDI-March 31, April 1 & 2, 2004)

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☎ 6350219 ☎ 6872354 ☎ 6872366 Fax 6350220
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OBITUARIES

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Mortuary and Crematory opening soon!

Tenemos el sentimiento de participarles que el

P. GREGORIO LIQUETE GIL

residente en la comunidad del Convento de
San Agustin, Instramuros, Manila, falleció el
31 de Marzo de 2004 a las 6:40 de la mañana,
a los 84 años de edad y 68 de vida religiosa,
a consecuencia de diabetis y neumonia,
habiendo recibido los santos sacramentos y demas
auxilios espirituales.

El funeral se celebrara en la Iglesia de San Agustin
el primero de abril a las dos y media de la tarde.

Saludos y oraciones.

Born on 07 July 1925 to the late spouses Teofilo C. Antonio & Salud J. Tansinsin

DR. CIRILO T. ANTONIO, M.D.

Of Bulacan, Bulacan and Burbank, California, U.S.A.

Died on 25 March 2004 at St. Vincent Medical Center, Los Angeles, California, U.S.A.

Viewing of his remains will be on 02 April 2004 at 9:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m. at Mission Hills Catholic Mortuary in Mission Hills, California after which a Holy Mass follows.

He will be cremated and interment will be on 10 April 2004 also at Mission Hills Catholic Mortuary in Mission Hills, California.

He is survived by his wife **Dr. Adelaida Brinas Antonio, M.D.**, and children, **Audie** and **Connie Vailoces, Rommel** and **Michelle Merino** (†), **Guia** and **Rosendo Toro**; and grandchildren **Nicole, Colleen** and **Lorenzo.**

Siblings **Wilfreda** and **Jerry De Jesus** (†), **Lydia, Francisca** and **Faustino Baclig, Sixto** and **Carina Hizon, Afrodisio** and **Lita Alava, Jose Marco, Remedios** and **Ernesto Gamalinda**; and sister-in-law **Arceli Brinas Villapando.**

Please pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

ENCARNACION C. LOPEZ

August 13, 1918 - March 28, 2004

Her bereaved husband **Col. Silverio T. Lopez**, AFP (Ret.); her children **Beng, Ces & Taiko, Diana & Elmer, Liz & Rey, Drake & Gilda, Gema & Noel** and her grandchildren and relatives request your prayers for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish, Mahinhin St., UP Village, Quezon City.

Interment will be on Saturday, April 3, 2004 after the 8:00 a.m. Mass.

I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.
John 14:6

Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for My sake will find it. Matthew 10:39

CARMEN BORROMEO CRISOL

Joined her Creator and was reunited with her husband
Brig. Gen. JOSE M. CRISOL
On March 31, 2004 at the age of 78.

We, her children **MARILOU** and **RUDY DE OCAMPO, JING** and **TUTTI (SUNTAY), BOBBY** and **GIRLIE (HIZON), DODO, FRED** and **SUSAN (MARTINEZ), RICKY** and **TETET (LIMJAP)** and **JOEY** and **KATHY (LLUCH)**; her grandchildren and great granddaughter; her brother **JUN BORROMEO**; sisters-in-law **MELY ROCES** and **ZENY BORROMEO**; brother-in-law **DORING YULO**; and other relatives and friends thank our Lord for allowing her to touch and enrich our lives and for making it possible for us to experience her love and goodness in countless ways. We request the pious readers to pray with us for her eternal peace and happiness.

Her body lies in state at Sta. Maria Della Strada Parish Church, Loyola Heights, Quezon City.

Her remains will be brought to the Loyola Memorial Park Chapel, Marikina City on Sunday, April 4, 2004.

Interment will be at the same place after the 2:00 p.m. Mass.

(In lieu of flowers, donations to OUR LADY OF PENTECOST PARISH, Loyola Heights, Quezon City will be appreciated).

CLASSIFIEDS

Sold palay get P1 per kg increase

STARTING this month, farmers will get an additional P1 per kg for their palay sold to the National Food Authority aside from the privelege to use the agency's modern post harvest facilities.

The move was in response to the farmers' requests to equalize the government support price for palay both for the main harvest and the summer crop. The price increase also manifests her desire to improve the economic lot of the farmers and her sensitivity to their plight.

NFA administrator Arthur C. Yap said the P1 increase in procurement package will be granted during the main crop and credited to the farmers' account. The farmers can use the accumulated amount to pay for the expenses or charges when they use the post harvest facilities of the agency or avail of NFA's services.

The NFA buys palay at P10 per kg for the summer harvest from February to July and P9 per kg for the main harvest from August to January. The support price is exclusive of the other incentives the NFA grants for palay being sold to the agency, such as the P0.10 per kg and P0.15 per kg transport and drying incentives and P0.25 per kg cooperative development incentive fund.

For inquiries, complaints and suggestions, the public may text NFA via cell phone number 0917-6210927.

Republic of the Philippines
PHILIPPINE HEALTH INSURANCE CORPORATION
Citystate Centre, 709 Shaw Boulevard, Pasig City

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

BIDDING FOR THE PROCUREMENT OF REMITTANCE FORMS (ME-5 AND MI-5) FOR THE USE OF THE TREASURY DEPARTMENT
NO. 2004 – 004 g

The Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PHILHEALTH) wishes to invite duly licensed printers, manufacturers or suppliers for the procurement of 72,950 pads of ME-5 Remittance forms for the employed sector and 20,850 pads of MI-5 Remittance forms for the use of the Individually Paying Member.

ME-5 Remittance Form for the Employed Sector		MI-5 Remittance Form for the Individually Paying Member	
Quantity	72,950 pads (14,590,000 sheets) (50 sets per pad @ 4 copies per set)	Quantity	20,850 pads (4,170,000 sheets) (50 sets per pad @ 4 copies per set)
Size	Width 7.75 inches x Length 5 inches	Size	Width 7 inches x Length 5 inches
Material	Imported Carbonless Paper/ Colored on Top Side only Impression must be clear up to the last ply White Carbonless paper Yellow Carbonless paper Green Carbonless paper Pink Carbonless paper Wrapping Paper Cover Chip Board	Material	Imported Carbonless Paper/ Colored on Top Side only. Impression must be clear up to the last ply White Carbonless paper Yellow Carbonless paper Green Carbonless paper Pink Carbonless paper Wrapping Paper Cover Chip Board
Process	Offset printing / Red Gum Padded Back to back printing on all copies	Process	Offset printing / Red Gum Padded Back to back printing on all copies
Serial Numbers:	9 Digits - All Numeric (Crash Numbering) 72,950 pads (206010001 - 209657500)	Serial Numbers:	9 Digits - All Numeric (Crash Numbering) 20,850 pads (103750001 - 104792500)
Packaging	50 pads per corrugated box	Packaging	50 pads per corrugated box
Serial Numbers must be posted on two (2) opposite sides of the box		Serial Numbers must be posted on two (2) opposite sides of the box	

The approved budget for the contract for the ME-5 forms is P2,511,668.50 M while the approved budget for the contract for MI-5 forms is P 633,840.00 coming from COB 2004.

Bid documents can be obtained from **April 2 to 15, 2004**, 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at the Office of the Secretariat – Bids and Awards Committees in the Central Office, (Room 1804) 18th floor, **PHILHEALTH**, Citystate Centre Bldg., #709 Shaw Blvd. Oranbo, Pasig City upon payment of a non-refundable fee of P1,500.00.

A pre-bid conference will be held on, **April 22, 2004** at 1:30 p.m. at the Office of the Secretariat – Bids and Awards Committees in the Central Office.

Submission of bids will be on **April 30, 2004** *on or before 12:00 noon* (during office hours) at the office of the BAC Secretariat (Room 1804). Opening of Bids will follow at ***1:30 p.m.*** at the same date and venue. The official time clock shall be the wall clock located at Room 1804 (Office of the BAC Secretariat). **Any bid submitted after the cut-off time will not be accepted.**

(Sgd.) OCTAVINO Q. ESGUERRA
Senior Vice President and Chief Actuary
BAC Chairman for Goods and Services

(PDI – April 1 & 2, 2004)

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DBP Development Bank of the Philippines

INVITATION FOR NEGOTIATED OFFER

The Development Bank of the Philippines will entertain offers on a First-Come, First-Served basis at the Asset Management Department, 2nd Floor, DBP Head Office, Sen. Gil Puyat Ave. cor. Makati Ave., Makati City for the following properties:

CODE	LOCATION		DESCRIPTION		MINIMUM BID
REAL ESTATE					
BAGUIO					
AMD-ML-111	Bo. Lucban (now Bo. Ambiong) Baguio City		18,517 m² two (2) adjoining interior parcels of vacant lots (TCT Nos. T-79824 and T-79823	P	37,034,000.00
BATAAN					
	Sta.Monica Homes, Sitio Wiswis Camaya, Mariveles:		Residential lots with bldg. & imprvmts.		
AMD-PY-112	Lot - 45	Blk - 8	50 m² TCT No. T-229490	P	240,800.00
AMD-PY-113	22	20	50 m² TCT No. T-229498		123,700.00
AMD-PY-114	8	9	50 m² TCT No. T-229500		180,000.00
AMD-PY-115	49	8	50 m² TCT No. T-229493		133,700.00
AMD-PY-116	3	9	50 m² TCT No. T-229485		137,200.00
BATANGAS					
	Transville Homes Subd., Banay-Banay, Lipa City:		Residential lots with bldg. & imprvmts.		
AMD-MC-117	Lot - 17	Blk - 13	40 m² TCT-141653	P	151,300.00
AMD-PY-118	8	10	40 m² TCT-141652	P	153,300.00
AMD-PY-119	20	30	40 m² TCT-140591	P	170,700.00
AMD-PY-120	21	2	40 m² TCT-140574	P	158,700.00
AMD-ML-121	7	11	40 m² TCT-141648	P	156,000.00
AMD-ML-122	4	11	40 m² TCT-141655	P	153,700.00
AMD-ML-123	32	2	40 m² TCT-140584	P	158,700.00
AMD-ML-124	26	2	40 m² TCT-141647	P	156,000.00
AMD-ML-125	25	31	40 m² TCT-140568	P	181,300.00
AMD-ML-126	20	13	40 m² TCT-140595	P	156,000.00
AMD-ML-127	6	13	40 m² TCT-140589	P	156,000.00
AMD-ML-128	20	11	40 m² TCT-140577	P	156,000.00
AMD-ML-129	11	13	40 m² TCT-140598	P	151,300.00
AMD-ML-130	15	13	40 m² TCT-140581	P	153,700.00
AMD-ML-131	18	30	40 m² TCT-140596	P	206,000.00
AMD-ML-132	10	11	44 m² TCT-140599	P	159,000.00
AMD-ML-134	1	7	60 m² TCT-140588	P	234,700.00
AMD-ML-135	11	2	60 m² TCT-141654	P	348,000.00
AMD-ML-136	12	13	60 m² TCT-140594	P	201,300.00
AMD-PY-137	19	7	60.5 m² TCT-141651	P	255,800.00
AMD-PY-138	8	3	61.6 m² TCT-141650	P	250,800.00
AMD-ML-139	12	11	69.3 m² TCT-141646	P	226,900.00
Bulacan					
AMD-ML-141	Sto. Niño St., Poblacion, Bustos		2,593 m² industrial/residential lot (TCT T-170606) with bldg. & imprvmts.	P	5,839,000.00
CHATTELS (sale on "as-is, where-is" basis)					
CWB-17a	La Campana Compound, EDSA		1 unit Topkit Static Tower Crane, Potain	P	538,200.00
CWB-17b	Balintawak, Quezon City		1 unit Trailer mounted high pressure concrete pump, SCHWING	P	229,000.00
CWB-18	Bldg. No. 639, Gridley St., SRF Compound, Subic Bay Freeport Zone, Subic, Zambales		Various machinery and equipment used for food processing	P P	24,000.00) to) 11,311,600.00)

Forms for negotiated offers may be obtained from AMD-Acquired Assets.

For inquiries, please call telephone numbers:
893-7172 or 818-9511 loc. 2218/2252 for Code starting with AMD; and
926-1686 or 818-9511 loc. 1411 for CWB

ASSET MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT

(PDI – April 1, 2004)

E-mail: pr_pep@inquirer.com.ph
aespinosa@inquirer.com.ph
Editor Aries Espinosa

Three days of great music at The Podium

WHEN The Podium holds its Three Day Sale on April 2 to 4, shoppers will not only experience great discounts and bargains at this upscale mall, but also great music from some of the country's top classical and contemporary artists.

The Akafellas and the amazing Bituin Escalante take centerstage on Friday, April 2. The young and hip Akafellas, who have transformed a capella into a cutting edge post genre now universally known as pop-capella, will perform at 6 p.m. Using their powerful voices, the group has pioneered and mastered pop-capella in the Philippines by combining jazz, r&b, hip hop, standards, bubble gum pop, alternative and techno music.

Bituin Escalante, who has moved from diva to icon by way of her powerful voice, distinct range, and intelligent musicality, will perform on the same day at 9 p.m.

Often compared to Shirley Bassey and Aretha Franklin, she was awarded the 2003 Await Award for Best Female Recording Artist, and recently launched her self-titled album under Viva Records. During the performance, Bituin will sing her album's carrier song I'm Sorry, and is sure to thrill audiences with her repertoire which includes Respect, I am Changing, Sunlight, Somewhere, When You Wish Upon a Star, I Will Survive and Sana Ay Ikaw Na Nga.

It's a date with the classics and standards on the second day of the sale on Saturday, April 3. The Manila Philharmonic Orchestra under Rodel Colmenar will bring rhythm and harmony to the mall at 5 p.m. This will be followed at 9 p.m. with the album launch of the Renaissance Project featuring musical director Gerard Salonga with Romy Jorolan and May Bayot.

The Renaissance Project features original songs by 1991 Awit Awards Best Composer Luigi de Dios. What makes this album unique is the variety of original songs in pop, ballad, acoustic, symphonic, traditional Filipino and Broadway styles. Gerard Salonga gives a fresh musical update of well-loved songs in the album with contemporary musical arrangements of Spirits Flying High, Your Sweet Smile, More Than You Know, There will be Others, Life Goes On, Family and Everlasting Love.

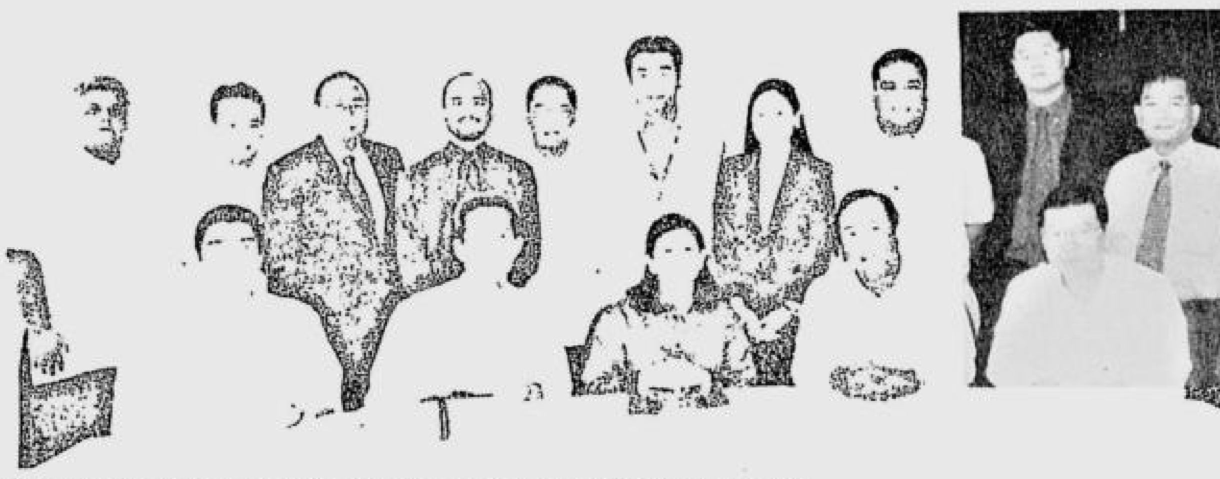
Flutist Jong Cuenco, saxophonist Tots Tolentino, and violinist John Lesaca will cap the festivities on Sunday, April 4, bringing together their individual talents in one memorable performance at 5 p.m.

All performances will be held at the Lounge at the Second Level of The Podium.

Strengthening Linkages

PLANTERSBANK WINS OUTSTANDING PFI AWARD

Planters Development Bank (Plantersbank), the country's largest private development bank, adds another feather to its cap when it bagged the Most Outstanding Participating Financial Institution (PFI) for a small and medium scale industry under the Japan Bank of International Cooperation Facilities. The award was presented by the Development Bank of the Philippines during an appreciation program and cocktails it recently sponsored. Photo shows (from left) Vitaliano Nañagas III, DBP chair; Ma. Flordelis Aguenza, Planterbank president and chief operating officer; Rafael Buenaventura, Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas governor; Amb. Jesus Tambunting, Plantersbank chair and CEO; Simson Paterno, DBP president; Ana Rose Kwan, Plantersbank first vice president; and Panser Tumangan, DBP senior vice president. Plantersbank is a leading bank that caters to small and medium enterprises and is backed by institutional shareholders that include World Bank's International Finance Corp, Asian Development Bank and the Netherlands Development Finance Co.



INQUIRER HOSTS LUNCHEON FOR MITSUBISHI MOTORS

The Philippine Daily Inquirer (PDI) recently hosted a luncheon for Mitsubishi Motors at the PDI Executive Boardroom. In photo are (seated, from left) PDI SVP for sales and marketing Rene Reinoso, Mitsubishi president Kengo Takase, PDI president Sandy Prieto-Romualdez, Mitsubishi SVP for marketing Melchor Dizon, Mitsubishi SEVP for marketing Yoshiaki Ichimura. Standing (from left) are PDI AVP for advertising Kenny Nuyda, Mitsubishi brand advertising supervisor Arlan Reyes Jr., PDI chief financial officer Luis Ymson, PDI SVP for corporate services Dave Valdes, PDI business editor Raul Marcelo, Mitsubishi VP for marketing Fumikiyo Kudo, PDI AVP for strategic communications Celine Madamba, Mitsubishi senior manager for marketing services Froilan Dytianquin, PDI VP for marketing Donald Lim and PDI VP for advertising Pepito Olarte.

First Data appoints senior executive to oversee Western Union Asia Pacific

FIRST Data Corp, a global leader in electronic commerce and payment services, today announced the addition of Ian Marsh as senior vice president and managing director of Asia Pacific for the company's Western Union business.

Marsh who joined the company on March 1, 2004, brings more than 30 years of experience - more than 16 years in Asia and Japan - in the global financial services arena and has held several leadership positions focusing on the development of the Asia Pacific marketplace. He will be responsible for providing the overall strategy, leadership and direction essential for Western Union's continued expansion in the Asia Pacific region including China.

"We have a strong commitment to grow our business in developing markets," said Christina Gold, president, Western Union Financial Services Inc. "Ian's deep understanding of the Asia Pacific marketplace coupled with his expertise with consumer financial services will make him a valued addition to our global team."

Marsh held various positions during a 30-year career with American Express, including vice president, Consumer Financial Services in Hong Kong and Korea; regional vice president, Business Partners in Japan, Asia and Australia; senior vice president, Card Travel and Insurance Operations in Hong Kong, the People's Republic of China, Taiwan and the Philippines, and president and CEO of the company in Japan. Prior to joining First Data, Marsh served as president for Reader's Digest Europe with executive responsibility spanning 18 European markets.

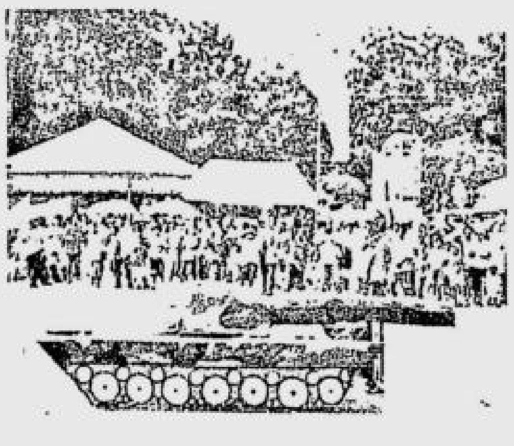
Marsh takes over responsibilities for the Asia Pacific region from Hikmet Ersek, senior vice president for Europe, Middle East and Africa (Emea), who was overseeing the Asia Pacific region on an interim basis. Ersek will continue in his capacity focusing on the Emea region, and also will assume responsibility for the South Asia Region, including India.

PAA: 'No plates, No travel' program fundamental to improvement

THE PHILIPPINE Automotive Association (PAA) recently met with National Anti-Kidnapping Task Force (NAKTF) Chief Angelo T. Reyes and his team to discuss the guidelines on implementing the "No plates, No travel" policy. After an open dialogue with the NAKTF Chief and his technical committee, the PAA has become more informed of what the program is all about and how it shall be implemented.

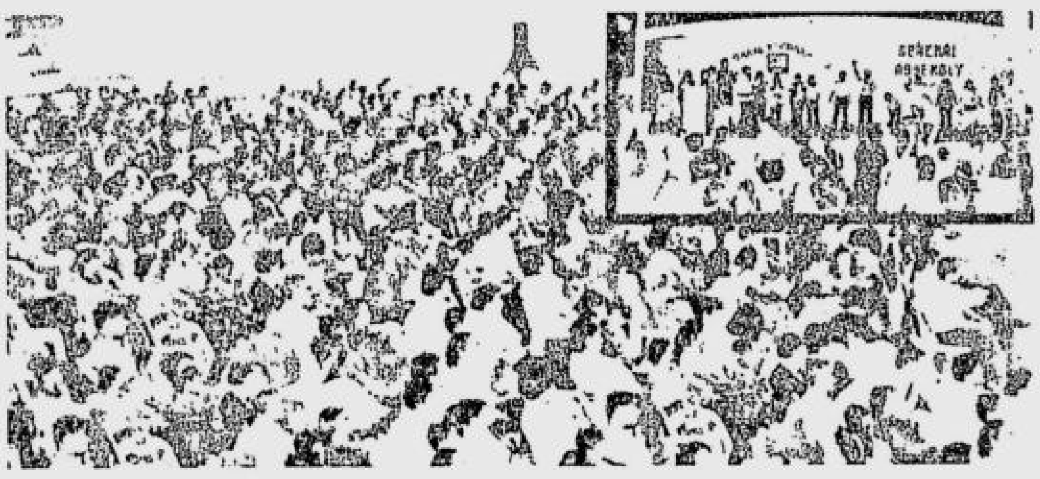
Now that the PAA is working together with the Land Transportation Office (LTO) and the NAKTF in disseminating information on NAKTF's "No plates, No travel" program, the PAA has become more aware of the program's fundamental role in the possible inquiry into systems and procedures of concerned agencies. The PAA acknowledges how essential the program is in providing everyone with the opportunity to review and modernize all transactions. The policy has become a gateway to a new program that would speed up the processing of vehicle registration and has opened doors to a smoother, more efficient flow of transactions.

The PAA believes in the "No plates, No travel" program and its ultimate goal of improving the current systems. The automotive dealers gratefully support NAKTF Chief Reyes and will be behind him in implementing the said policy. The PAA also extends its gratitude to LTO Assistant Secretary Anneli Lontoc, whose openness to suggestions and recommendations made the further improvement of the process of vehicle registration more promising.



BEAR BRAND KITEFEST IN GEN SAN

The General Santos City Oval Freedom Plaza was filled with thousands of eager spectators as it recently hosted its first ever Bear Brand Kitefest. In photo is a replica of a tank, only one of the many creative entries in the 4th leg of the Kitefest which was also simultaneously held in Palawan. The next stop of the country's kite event was Cagayan de Oro, held last March 28 at the Don Gregorio Pelaez Sports Complex.

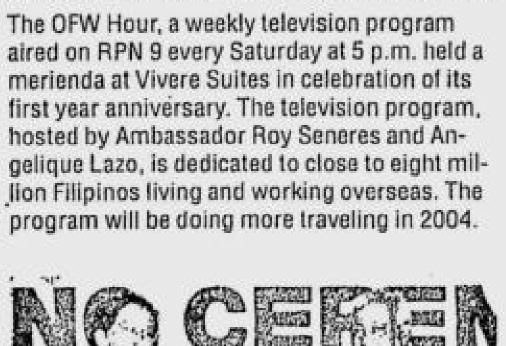


SHOW OF FORCE

Around one thousand strong sales force attended the general assembly and sales rally of RCD Realty Corp held last Jan. 24 at the Amphitheater of Brgy. Kapitolyo, Pasig City. Leading them are their (inset) president, Roland Delantar; their gener manager, Arvin Francisco, and their respective vice presidents for sales: Elsa Besenio (Crystal Division), Merlene Cariño (Diamond Division), Boy Gonzalo (Emerald Division), Linda Damaso (Garnet Division), Ella Go (Gold Division), Norma Eboña (Jade Division), Emma Viejo (Pearl Division), Irene Igpit (Platinum Division), and Fred Denolo (Ruby Division). All RCD staffs were also present. With its 16 years of existence and wide array of sales network, RCD Realty is a force to reckon with in the real estate industry. For the year 2004, the company is targeting P1.3 billion worth of sales from the various inventories of different developers they are accredited with construction and its own project development.

'THE OFW HOUR' CELEBRATES 1ST ANNIVERSARY AT VIVERE SUITES

The OFW Hour, a weekly television program aired on RPN 9 every Saturday at 5 p.m. held a merienda at Vivere Suites in celebration of its first year anniversary. The television program, hosted by Ambassador Roy Seneres and Angelique Lazo, is dedicated to close to eight million Filipinos living and working overseas. The program will be doing more traveling in 2004.



AGREEMENT SIGNING

AFP-Retirement and Separations Benefits System (RSBS) president, Cesar Jayme Jr (left) and president and chair of DM Wenceslao Inc, Delfin Wenceslao Jr. (center) sealed their agreement with the exchange of documents during the signing ceremony appointing Bay Resources and Development Corp (Bradco) as project and leasing manager of the PriceSmart Membership Warehouse Shopping Club, held recently at the PriceSmart site on Aseana Business Park, Roxas Blvd., Parañaque City. For lease of commercial space at the 2nd floor of PriceSmart-Asean, contact Loree Villarama at 911-8693 or 912-4654 from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Mondays through Fridays.

Bits Clips

Trinity College's 41st Commencement speaker

TRINITY College of Quezon City celebrates its 41st commencement exercises with Chief Justice Hilario G. Davide Jr. as its guest speaker. This year's graduation rites will be held on April 1, at 9 a.m. at the Reception Hall of the Philippine International Convention Center (PICC). An acknowledged leader by example, Chief Justice Davide embodies Trinity's core values of integrity, excellence, teamwork and innovation.

MA, MPOPS Fellowships at UP

THE UNIVERSITY of the Philippines Population Institute (Uppi) is pleased to announce the availability of fellowships for those interested to pursue a degree either in Master of Arts in Demography (MA) or Master in Population Studies (MPOPS) beginning June. The grants provide a monthly stipend, book allowance, free tuition and other matriculation fees. Deadline for the submission of application forms is on April 1. Write to the director, UP Population Institute, 3/F, Palma Hall, Diliman Quezon City, or call (02)920-5402 or 927-4166 or 929-1770. Email Uppi at popinst@up.edu.ph.

The Positivism Art Workshop

THE POSITIVISM Art Workshop is now accepting children and adults interested to learn the basic of drawings and paintings once a week (for 7 weeks), with focus on positive subjects. It will be conducted by E.R. Tagle and his artist-friends, which will start on April 1. For inquiries, call the Positivism Art Gallery at 899-6358 and 0927-552-2288.

'Dancin 'n Rockin' party slated

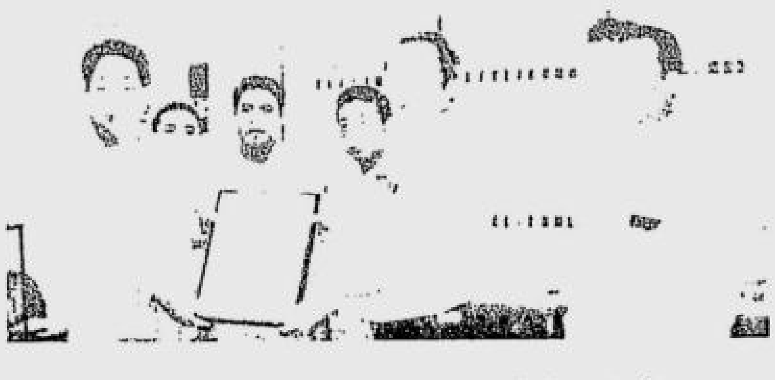
THE HERMANOS Y Hermanas 2004 of Our Lady of Beautiful Love Parish of Merville, Parañaque together with Globe Telecom and Unilever Phils will be presenting "Dancin 'n Rockin" on April 2, 7 p.m. at the Phil. Army Officer's Clubhouse, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig, Metro Manila. It will feature the two hottest bands in town - Rockin' Revival and The Bedroom Boys - who will be playing their repertoire of retro music and top 40 hits. For ticket inquiries call 824-2688.

'Philippines, Gateway to the Orient' exhibit

THE EXHIBITION entitled 'Philippines, Gateway to the Orient: From Legazpi to Malaspina', showcases artifacts dated between the 16th through 18th centuries that were part in the Manila Galleon Trade. It will be on view until April 2004 at the National Museum. For information, call the National Museum at 528-4912

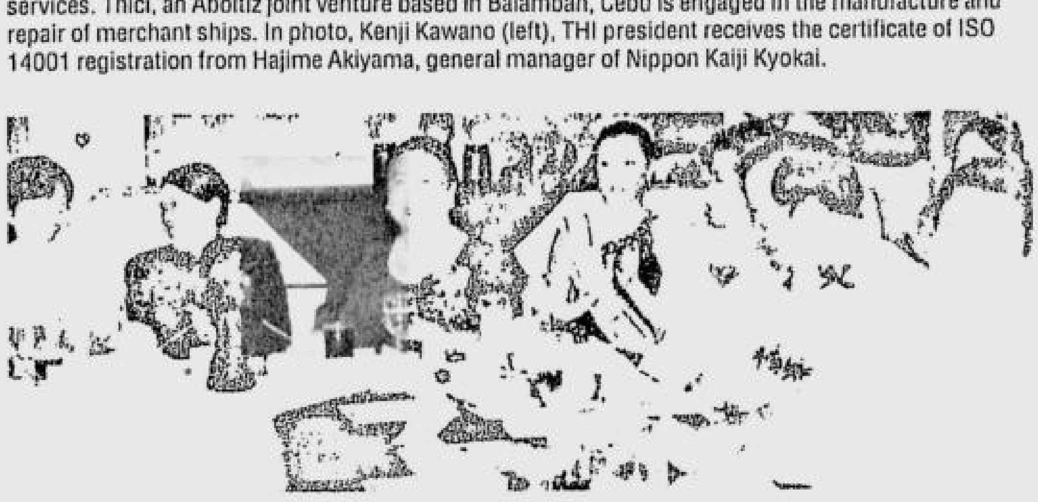
Polillo, Quezon's 417th Grand Town Fiesta

THE MUNICIPALITY of Polillo, Quezon recently celebrated its 417th Grand Town Fiesta on March 17, 18 and 19. Polillo abounds with unspoiled beaches, breathtaking sights and rich natural resources that continue and never fails to attract and captivate the hearts of the Filipinos.



THICI RECEIVES ISO 14001 CERTIFICATION

Tsuneishi Heavy Industries (Cebu) Inc has been certified for its Environmental Management Systems (EMS) by Nippon Kaiji Kyokai based on the ISO 14001:1996 standards. EMS is a set of management tools, principles and procedures that an organization can use to help protect human health and the environment from the potential impacts of the organization's activities, products and services. Thici, an Aboitiz joint venture based in Balamban, Cebu is engaged in the manufacture and repair of merchant ships. In photo, Kenji Kawano (left), THI president receives the certificate of ISO 14001 registration from Hajime Akiyama, general manager of Nippon Kaiji Kyokai.



GAWAD PARANGAL

The Cabanatuan City government held its 'Gawad Parangal' (tribute) for outstanding Cabanatueños with Richard Gordon and his wife Katherine as guest of honor (2nd and 3rd from right) at La Parilla Hotel recently. Others in photo are Nueva Ecija Governor Tomas Joson III, NE Group of Companies chair and CEO Letty Uy, Ria Vergara, Dr. Susan Garcia and the 2003 winners of the annual search for 'Miss Cabanatuan City'. The outstanding Cabanatueños are Dr. Simon Barlis, engineer Danilo Pagsambungan, Nieves Villamin, Dr. Rowena Cayme-Kim, Police Supt. Laverne Manangbao, Faustino Sta. Maria, Alberto Morfe, Mariano de Lara, Mila Agulto and Police Supt. Elmer Macapagal.

MOTORING

E-mail: pr_motoring@inquirer.com.ph

Editor Cesar D. Mangawang

A YELLOW Escape gets a tan under the sun.

ULYSSES ANG, MOTIONCARS.COM

JOSE LUIS ROMUALDEZ, AUTOEXTREME

JUST like the Escape ad: up, up and away!

Escaping gravity and the ordinary

By Tessa R. Salazar

> For it is only when we escape from the ordinary and the routine can we see the bigger picture and start fresh

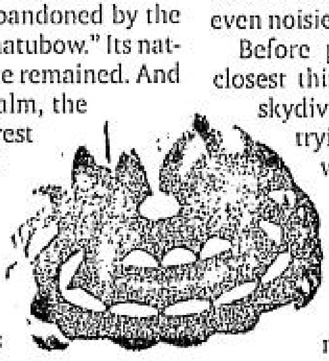
WOULDN'T it be nice to be just above it all for once, be on top of the world and look down at the big picture? Wouldn't it be so magical, maybe invigorating, to defy a natural law or two every now and then and make Mother Nature chase you around like you were a playful little child being her naughty little self?

Summer always seems to make you long for days like that—for times out of the ordinary. Just last weekend, that longing was answered and lived just three hours north of Manila.

This Friday less ordinary started out not that promising at all. We had to wring ourselves out of the North Luzon Expressway morning traffic for a good three hours first. Then we had to ignore the sounds coming from the imploring megaphone campaigns of local provincial politicians next. By the time our convoy of Ford vehicles crept past the last mayoralty candidate holding up traffic somewhere in Zambales, I was almost giving up the day for good.

Natural wonders

But the magic of the day swept back over us when we entered the Subic Bay Freeport Zone, or more commonly known as the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority. This former US naval base may have been abandoned by the big burly Joes because of "Pinatubow." Its natural wonders, thankfully, have remained. And every time I enter Subic's realm, the spirits of the sea and the forest seem to possess me. And as soon as the sentry guards at the Subic tollway handed out those white leaflets dictating "good manners and right conduct" within SBMA, the tortuous, tenuous three hours it took just to get here were simply erased.



Should you eventually get comfy with the rather stiff traffic rules of the SBMA, you would appreciate more what nature has prepared for Subic Bay's visitors both on land and on sea.

Enjoying Subic spectacles

On this day, our group of 28 motoring journalists and Ford officers evenly distributed among eight Ford vehicles (six Escapes and two 4x4 Rangers) intended to make the most of our day enjoying what Subic had to offer.

ULYSSES ANG, MOTIONCARS.COM

THE RAGING fly fish ride with folks from Ford and the motoring media

You must have heard of stories of playful monkeys standing on the roadside waiting for passing motorists to stop and offer them peanuts. Well, if you happen to be at the right place at the right time, you will see for yourself that the stories are true, indeed. But SBMA authorities strongly advise against giving in to these monkeys' seemingly innocent demands. "Try and maintain some 'professional distance' between you and them," they say. "The less they depend on you for food, the better their chances of survival."

Monkeys aren't the only wild animal spectacles in Subic. If you look up anytime during the day (especially when the sun is out), you might see ravens, falcons and eagles circling above the thick Zambales forest canopies. And during twilight, thousands of bats awaken and fly out of their nests.

Parasail ride

To get the ultimate view of Subic Bay and its environs, we had to get down to sea level first—down at the waterfront. And this Friday couldn't have been more perfect for a round of recreational parasailing: the sky was clear and the waters silent and calm, the silence broken now and then by noisy sea birds and even noisier jet skis.

Before parasailing, which would be the closest thing non-parachutists would get to skydiving, we psyched ourselves up by trying on the more "conventional" watersports activities: jetskiing.

That done, with enough saltwater sprayed on my body, I felt I was ready to try the ultimate activity for the day.

The Subic Bay Parasail, in a nutshell, involves a parachute hauled by a speedboat, and the parasailer is caught somewhere in between. The parasail captain maneuvers the direction of the parachute, another person steers the boat. A rider sits on a latch attached below the parachute. When the boat speeds away, the onrushing air picks the parachute up, along with it the parasailer, to 400 feet high. Imagine a kite. The kite is the parachute, the kite flyer is the captain and the boat navigator, and you are that little ribbon strung just below the kite.

A parasail ride lasts just 10 minutes, but for me it seemed to last forever. It was, sans exaggeration, one of my most serene moments at sea—once I got over my fear of it, of course. At such an altitude, Subic Bay was a mere sparkling blue pool of water, the rugged Zambales terrain like a brownish green bed sheet unmade by playful children. The sun was nearly at eye level, and on my right was a falcon staring at me, I think, and it seemed to bear that puzzled frown. What in heaven's name are you doing up here, I imagined it scolding me. You're in my airspace, fool, I imagined myself retorting back.

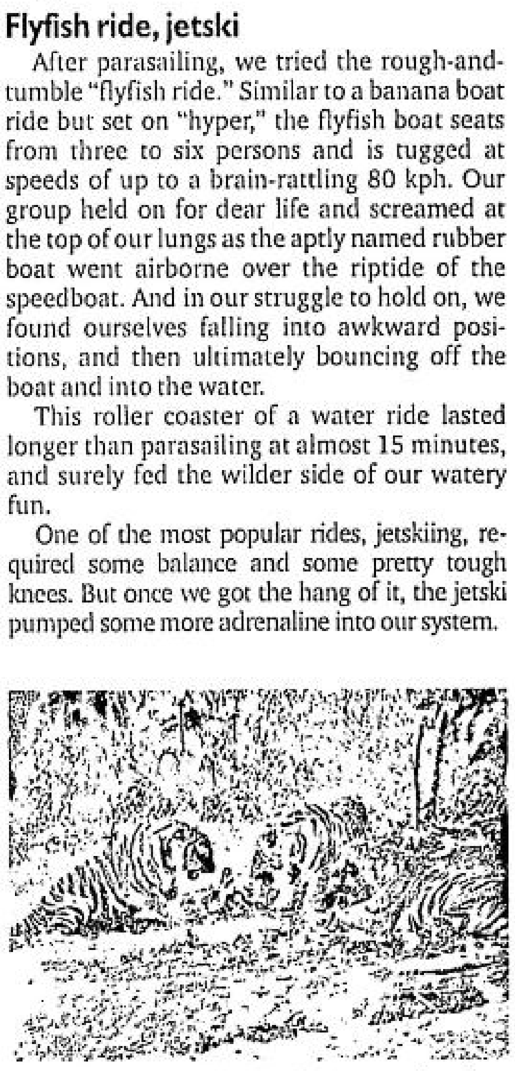
In between such wonderful sensory inputs, I actually was able to meditate—not bad for somebody who has always been afraid of heights.

Flyfish ride, jetski

After parasailing, we tried the rough-and-tumble "flyfish ride." Similar to a banana boat ride but set on "hyper," the flyfish boat seats from three to six persons and is tugged at speeds of up to a brain-rattling 80 kph. Our group held on for dear life and screamed at the top of our lungs as the aptly named rubber boat went airborne over the riptide of the speedboat. And in our struggle to hold on, we found ourselves falling into awkward positions, and then ultimately bouncing off the boat and into the water.

This roller coaster of a water ride lasted longer than parasailing at almost 15 minutes, and surely fed the wilder side of our watery fun.

One of the most popular rides, jetskiing, required some balance and some pretty tough knees. But once we got the hang of it, the jetski pumped some more adrenaline into our system.



RAGING tigers of Zoobic Adventure longing to escape. ULYSSES ANG, MOTIONCARS.COM

Land-based animals

On terra firma, the group spent some quality time with land-based animals at the Zoobic Safari Adventure. The group marveled at the Safari's resident reptiles, miniature horses, ostriches, emus and boars, and witnessed wild animals such as tigers and crocodiles roaming around in their natural habitats. I guess the monkeys wouldn't bother begging for peanuts here. They'll hit the road anytime.

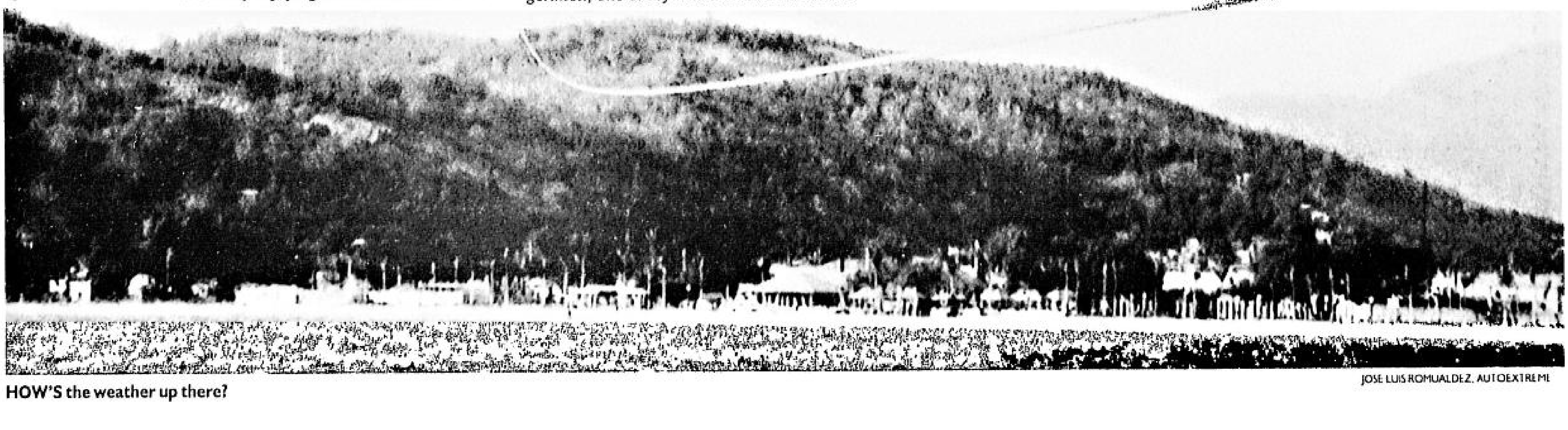
So, what started out as an imprisoning gridlock on the highways turned out to be an empowering Subic adventure that was certainly out of the ordinary. The people at Ford Motor Philippines certainly know their vehicles well enough to match these with the perfect activity. Indeed, the verdict we have this time is applicable not just for the car but for Subic as well. The Escape will inspire you to always try something new. If it didn't, then this P1.345-million V6, 3-liter mini SUV is a shameful waste. And even if you think you may never get to afford an Escape in this lifetime, nothing can stop you from enjoying the wonders of this country. So walk, ride the jeep, take the bus, pedal that bike to anywhere nature beckons and adventure awaits. For it is only when we escape from the ordinary and the routine can we see the bigger picture and start fresh.

Warning to Holy Week vacationers!

Those making the trip North better be prepared for the traffic gridlock at the North Luzon Expressway. The number of vehicles expected to pass through the 84-km expressway on Holy Wednesday alone would reach an estimated 400,000. The NLE can only take in about 350,000 vehicles.

So, will it be hell on earth again on this stretch of highway? Manila North Tollways Corp. has promised to ease traffic somewhat by stopping all road works on Holy Week, and removing all construction equipment out of the way. Nevertheless, always be prepared, don't leave those portable urine bags at home.

All the watersports activities mentioned above were provided by Networks. The parasail ride costs about P1,000 per person (plus P300 per parasail captain). The flyfish ride costs P500 per head. The jetski costs P2,400 per hour, or P1,400 for 30 minutes.



HOW'S the weather up there?

JOSE LUIS ROMUALDEZ, AUTOEXTREME

BMW diesels shine in recent DOE fuel-efficiency challenge

THE STRAIGHT-SIX engine of the BMW X5 3.0d showcases the German carmaker's advanced diesel technology in pursuit of pure performance.

By Charles E. Buban

SAVE money and help keep our air clean.

For vehicles with diesel engines, the first one is quite easy to carry out as a liter of diesel costs several pesos lower than gasoline.

Furthermore, a diesel engine can make more power with less fuel than a gasoline engine.

The tricky part comes with the second as diesel engined vehicles are said to be responsible for producing tons of smog-forming nitrogen oxides and toxic soot (particulate matter) over their lifetime.

BMW Philippines, somehow took this as a challenge when it participated in the recent Fuel Economy Run 2004 of the Department of Energy.

Showcasing technology

"We want to showcase our engine technology and we are proud that in our first try (joining the energy department's annual event), we were able to top the two categories we participated in," said BMW Philippines corporate communication manager Lito German.

The two BMW diesel entries were the 530d (for the passenger car category) and the X5 (for the sports utility vehicle category).

At the end of the three-hour run, BMW X5 3.0d topped the SUV category by consuming only 13.933 liters of diesel for a fuel mileage of 12.201 kilometers per liter.

The new BMW 530d likewise delivered optimum results in its class, consuming only 8.005 liters in the 170 kilometer run, for a fuel efficiency of 21.237 km per liter.

These results were comparable to other category winners: a Toyota Vios entry consumed a total of only 7.574 liters of gasoline (mileage of 22.44 kilometers to a liter of gasoline) to capture the overall most fuel-efficient title and an Isuzu Crosswind entry that consumed a total of 8.683 liters of diesel (mileage of 19.58 kilometers to a liter of diesel) to top the Asian utility vehicle categories.

6-cylinder diesel engine

Like the X5, the 530d is run by the same BMW six-cylinder diesel engine featuring second-generation common rail technology.

"It's also good to note that the results of the 530d and the X5 at economy run were better than the published fuel efficiency results of both vehicles," reported German.

However, German was quick to clarify that average fuel consumption results vary depending on many factors such as driving style, load, road conditions, traffic density and flow, weather and tire pressure.

Changing expectations

"The new generation of BMW diesel engines has changed expectations of diesel motoring forever," according to German.

BMW 530d six-cylinder diesel engine is one of the most powerful and efficient engines in its class.

The new-generation 3.0-liter diesel engine featured in the 530d and X5 3.0d balances frugality with near sports car performance plus they are comparable to the spark ignition gasoline engines in noise levels and 0 to 100 kph acceleration.

Producing 160 kW of power and 500 of torque, the 530d can accelerate from standstill to 100 kph in 7.1 seconds (with a top speed of 245 kph) while the X5 3.0d can do it in 8.3 seconds (with a top speed of 210 kph).

What's more, they no longer have the traditional "diesel smell" and the diesel engines will provide roughly twice the service life.

As an additional benefit, the 3.0-liter diesels have a maintenance-free particulate filter to ensure that they comply with the EU4 emissions standards.

Promoting awareness

The government-run efficiency test, which aims to promote the awareness of fuel economy among consumers, gathered 22 entries from nine car manufacturers in the country.

Apart from BMW, other carmakers including Columbian Autocar Corp., Honda Cars Philippines, Isuzu Philippines Corp., Mitsubishi Motors Philippines, Nissan Motor Philippines, Toyota Motor Philippines, Universal Motors Corp. and Viking Cars, also signed up.

The group, composed of 65 vehicle convoy, traveled a total distance of 170 km from the DOE Center in Taguig to Lipa City in Batangas—and then back to the starting point—at an average speed of 60 km per hour but not exceeding 80 kph.

All the vehicles had their air-conditioning system, headlights and hazard lights on.

To the brim

Fuel consumption was measured by filling every vehicle's fuel tanks up to the brim, and then refilling the tanks again to the same level after the run.

The run was sponsored by Total (Philippines) Corp. Volunteers from the Citizens Traffic Action Group (CTA) were selected at random to drive the cars, and driver assignments were rotated regularly at predesignated stops.

Each vehicle was provided with a driver and a navigator.

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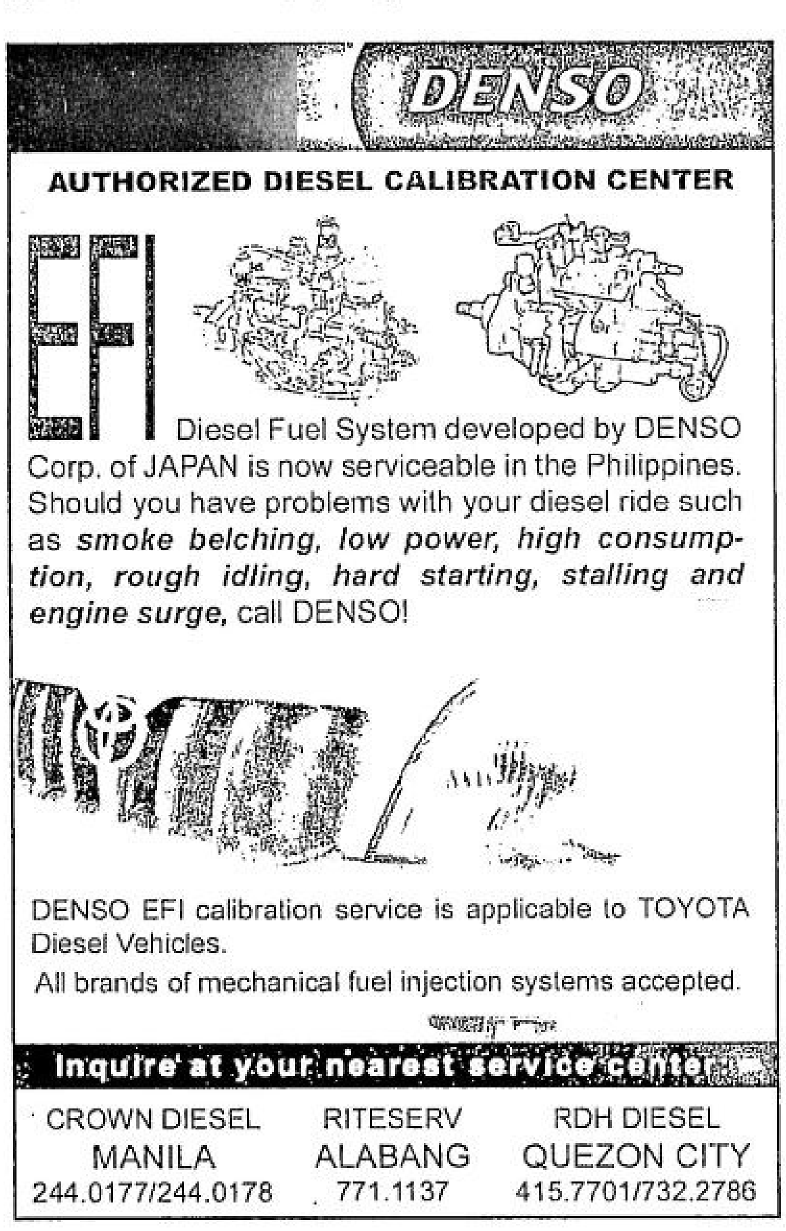

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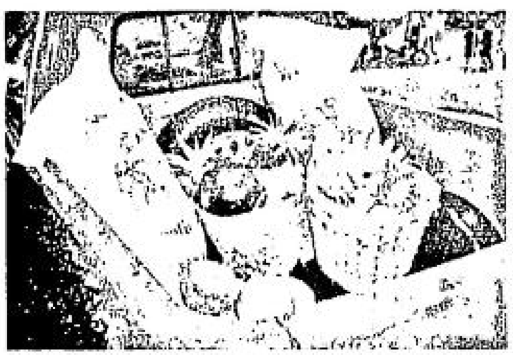
Small wonder

Text and photos
by Charles E. Buban

LIKE the jeepneys that were fashioned out of the army jeeps left here by the Americans after World War II, a new vehicle type based on the Daihatsu Mira from Japan is making its debut in the local market.

A unique vehicle, the Legacy First is powered by a reconditioned 660 cc engine imported from Japan, a chassis, parts and body rebuilt and redesigned by Norkis Group of Companies.

"This is yet another case of Filipino ingenuity and our desire to help thousands of our workers who were displaced by the entry of cheap automotive parts from abroad," revealed Norberto Quisumbing Jr., founder and chair of the Cebu-based automotive manufacturer and distributor.



JUST like the label says, you can load this mini pickup with up to 350 kg of load.

LOOKS like your regular compact sedan but it isn't: this two-seater vehicle features a pickup bed perfect for small deliveries.

The Legacy First resembles a two-seater pickup, only much smaller.

SMALL/B9

Honda deserves praise

FULL TANK

Al Mendoza

A FRIEND of mine is torn between Pajero and Volvo.

"Which of them is better, Pajero or Volvo?"

"It would all boil down to personal preferences," I said to him. "If what you are buying is a Volvo SUV, then maybe, it'd make a difference. It'd be like comparing FPJ to Eddie Gil—one has a better-looking sideburns than the other. But between a Pajero and a Volvo passenger car, there's no comparison at all."

* * *

My friend said he would really much prefer the Pajero.

"But the trouble is, I'm being offered a very minimal discount," he said. "That is why I went to Pasong Tamo and tried to swing for a Volvo XC-90. I left the salesman with a counteroffer that I hope he would not refuse."

I am very much interested in the ending of the story. But as deadline is the ultimate boss of every journalist, you and I have to wait another week.

* * *

I salute the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) for acting swift to arrest sellers/producers of fake Honda spare parts.

Some days back, elements of the NBI had swooped down on five warehouses suspected to be engaged in the largescale distribution of Honda counterfeit parts. Several thousand pieces of counterfeit parts had been confiscated from the warehouses of A&G Bikeshop, Ebay Commercial, Player's Choice and Zigma Sales Center by the agents from the Intellectual Property Rights Division (IPRD).

Here's a glass to lawyer Renato M. Garbo III and Joseph and G. Furing for their spearheading efforts in executing the operations.

* * *

The raids—four targets in Quezon City and one large warehouse in Meycauayan, Bulacan believed to be owned by one Filipino-Chinese family—were made on the strength of search and seizure warrants issued by Judge Antonio Eugenio Jr. of Branch 24 of the Manila RTC and Judge Rodrigo Caspillo of Branch 24 Cabanatuan RTC.

The complaint was lodged by Honda Motor Co. Ltd of Japan through its local law firm E.B Astudillo and Associates against these five establishments that are engaged in importation, distribution and sale of Honda fake motorcycle and automobile parts in violation of Honda's intellectual property rights.

Honda, known hereabouts as the biggest manufacturer of motorcycles in the Philippines and the popular automobile models like Civic, CRV and Accord, has been repeatedly victimized by unscrupulous people out to cash in on its smashing success in the automotive industry.

* * *

Honda has had problems with fake spare parts being peddled in after-market deals.

The recent raids on the lairs of counterfeit operators should serve as a serious warning to all those yet-to-be-arrested operators of illegal trades.

It hurts really to see fake spare parts being sold, not only because Honda is being deprived of its legal rights under Philippine laws but also because the fake spare parts would easily break down, bringing down the reputation of Honda in the process. Accidents due to poor quality could result in the loss of life and limb for vehicle users.

* * *

For the record, the IPRD-NBI agents carried out the simultaneous raids on Player's Choice located at 206 Jimenez Building, G. Araneta Ave.; A&G Bike Shop at 1 Balabac St., Bgy Doña Imelda, QC and 202 Jimenez Building, G. Araneta Ave. and Ebay Commercial located at 48 Tirad Pass, Sto Domingo, QC, and one large warehouse inside the Sterling Industrial Park in Barangay Iba, Meycauayan, Bulacan.

Honda deserves praise for this. For taking the risk of exposing itself to harm, Honda must be extolled for bravery. It is for this that I further raise my glass (of red wine?) to Honda. Without courage, the unscrupulous peoples in our society will be as free as a bird to undertake their illegal activities.

I hope our law enforcers will also start spying on establishments on Banawe Street in Quezon City, many of whom are suspected fencers (sellers of stolen spare parts and fake parts), and next effect massive raids, too.

* * *

My congratulations to Isuzu Philippines Corp. (IPC) for bagging recently the prestigious Isuzu Manufacturing Management (IMM) bronze award. IPC assistant department managers Dave Yandoc (Manufacturing) and Angel Cells Jr. (Quality Control) accepted the award at their Sta. Rosa plant in Biñan, Laguna.

IMM is a manufacturing system where the activities of the universally known methods for general manufacturers such as ISO 1400 (International Organization for Standardization), QS 9000 (Quality System), TPM (Total Preventive Maintenance), TQM (Total Quality Management), IPS (International Product Standard) and IE (Industrial Engineering) are strictly applied.

Said IPC president Toru Koyasu: "In-line inspection; outsourced parts quality assurance; tightening quality management; and, quality audit meetings. These are the key factors to our victory."

Present during the awarding ceremony were IML representatives, namely: Tadaharu Matsuo, executive officer, Vehicle Manufacturing; Hiroshi Doi and Tomoyoshi Yamada, both managers of IMM Benchmark Group, Vehicle Manufacturing Preparation Department; and, Tsutae Hasebe, manager of Quality Control Department.

* * *

QUOTE ME. To drive slow is not driving safely. It is driving with moderate speed that is driving safely.

Motor sport and the AAP

ON THE ROAD

Aida Sevilla-Mendoza

FEW people outside car racing circles are aware that Automobile Association Philippines (AAP, formerly the Philippine Motor Association) as the country's national auto club and the only Philippine affiliate of Federacion Internationale de l'Automobile(FIA), is authorized to officiate all motor sport disciplines in this country and to issue a competition license to race drivers and organizing permits. The FIA, if you don't know it yet, is an independent, nonprofit association that is the governing body of motor sport worldwide, including Formula One. The FIA's membership consists of some 150 national motoring clubs from 120 countries on five continents representing over 100 million motorists and their families.

As the FIA's Philippine affiliate, AAP is involved in all motor sport events in the country: karting, rally, rallycross, circuit racing, slalom, drag racing and 4x4 off-roading. AAP sends at least one representative to join the panel of stewards who make sure that the event is conducted in a safe manner and that FIA rules are implemented fairly. In case of a protest or a dispute such as over the eligibility of a car, AAP arbitrates. If and when warranted, AAP imposes fines. AAP also fines the defaulting organizer if an event is cancelled, postponed or its status altered for any reason other than force majeure.

63 in 2003

Judging from the AAP motor sport calendar in 2003, motor sport is alive and kicking in the Philippines. The calendar included 17 circuit racing events with two races per event organized by Sports Values Inc., Batangas Racing Circuit (BRC) and Asian Formula 3. Next highest in frequency were 12 slalom events organized by Rale Motorsports Club, followed by 11 karting events (one international, 10 national) at Carmona Circuit Philippines. Activity Asia Association held 10 rally cross events and four rally events last year, while Professional Race Organizers had five drag racing events. The Angeles 4 Wheelers, not to be left behind, organized four 4x4 off-road events. All in all, 63 calendared motor sport events were held last year.

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Next motor sport capital

In Cebu, where AAP has a branch office and driving school, AAP officiates drag races and karting events that are part of the national series. Cebu is emerging as the next motor sport capital of the Philippines, having hosted the hugely successful 2003 Adrenaline Rush, a regional drag racing festival. Last January, Cebu hosted the National Drag Race Fest, also at the South Reclamation Project. Both were AAP-sanctioned events.

Meanwhile, local karting events are held at Kart Zone in Mabolo every six weeks. AAP plans to further promote motor sport in Cebu, especially car rallies. Toward this objective, the cooperation of two motor sport organizations—the Auto Rally Club of the Philippines and the Philippine International Karting Association—is expected since both are affiliated with AAP. According to AAP Cebu's general manager, some young drivers from Cebu have been competing and are doing well at the Carmona circuit, BRC and Subic International Raceway.

* * *

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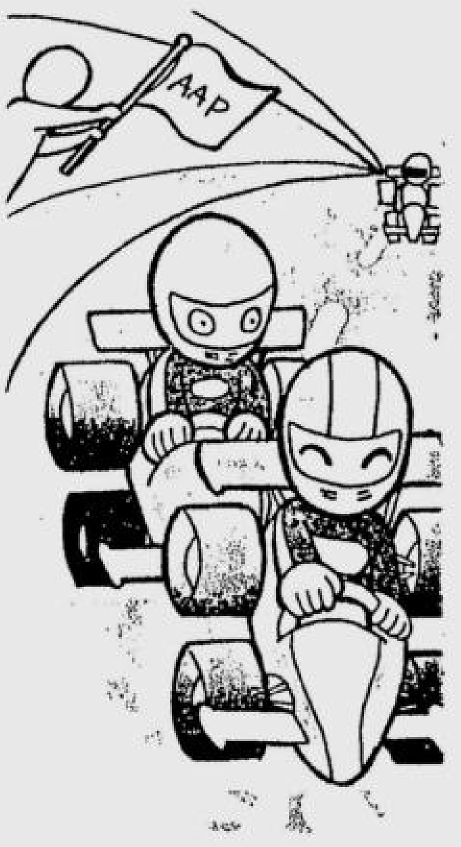
* * *

E-mail comments to asevilla@inquirer.com.ph.



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—Minardo Obias of Tayatay, Rizal

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But these days, aluminum has taken over as the most common material used mainly because of one clear advantage: its weight. A typical copper/brass radiator that weighs 15 pounds would only weigh about 5 ½ lb when made of aluminum. Sometime in the 1980s, the push to improve fuel economy began to tip the scales in favor of aluminum because of its lighter weight. The durability of aluminum is also another factor. Although copper can begin with a higher performance than aluminum in a radiator, after about 6 months, heated water stains copper resulting in lower heat transfer to below that of aluminum.

But over the next few years, new copper/brass radiators that could last 10 years will debut in the market. The International Copper Association helped develop this new technology producing radiators that are up to 40 percent lower in weight compared to traditional, copper/brass radiators, and correspondingly lower in material costs. The new brazed copper/brass radiators also lower air side pressure drop by over 30 percent compared to aluminum radiators.

So which do we recommend? Although at the moment, we pretty much have to go with aluminum, our vote goes with the new wave of copper/brass if it lives up to its promises.

Small wonder

From page B8

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Powered by a 3-cylinder, 4-stroke engine (mated to a manual 4-speed transmission), the Legacy First can achieve a modest 110 kph top speed.

But what's interesting to note is its fuel consumption: it attained an average of 15 km per liter (a high 20 km per L) when it was road tested from Manila to Tuguegarao (via Baguio) and another one from Manila to Legaspi (via Naga) in Bicol.

"We are positioning the Legacy First as a personal ride that can be used for business: its pickup bed can carry a modest volume of load perfect for small deliveries," said Manuel Canilao of Porta Coeli Industrial Corp., (a Norkis Group affiliate) the Legacy First's distributor.

Multicab hybrid

This is not the first time the Norkis Group brought in a vehicle from abroad to be rebuilt and redesigned for Philippine market.

In 1990 the company invented the Multicabs, a new class of vehicles which are much smaller than jeepneys and run on a Daihatsu 660-cc gasoline engine imported from Japan.

Today these vehicles are widely used in the provinces where they are fast replacing jeepneys and tricycles because of their affordability, functionality and less cost on maintenance.

"We want the same thing to happen with the Legacy First. It's an affordable alternative that even those with little income can afford: it costs only P175,000," according to Porta Coeli's Michael Valdecañas.

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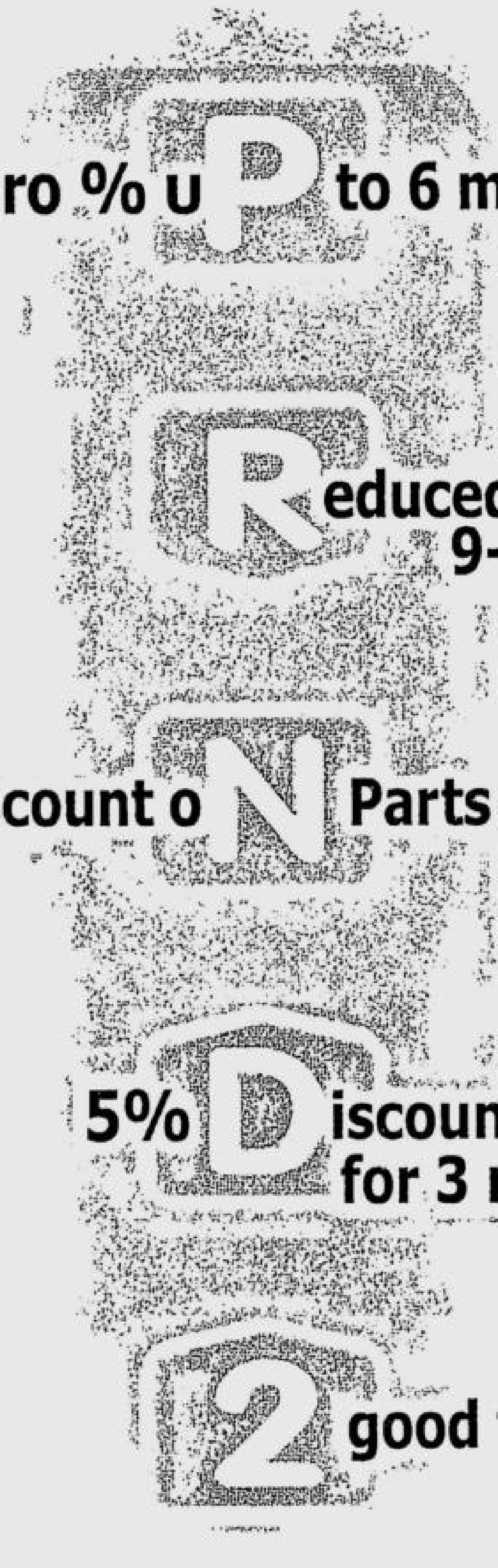

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MITSUBISHI MOTORS

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3 PASSION OF THE CHRIST
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5 PASSION OF THE CHRIST
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9 BUTTERFLY EFFECT
10 HIDALGO

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2 SCOOBY DOO 2
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4 OTSO-OTSO
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6 HOUSE OF THE DEAD
7 50 FIRST DATES
8 KARIBAL

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3 TORQUE
4 DIABLO

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4 DON'T TEMPT ME
5 SCOOBY DOO
6 THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST
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5

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(Las Pinas) tel 873.5004
1 PEEP SHOW
2 THE CURSE

PREMIERE CINEMA THX
(Makati City) tel 892.2503
PASSION OF THE CHRIST

Centre Plaza Cinema
(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007
1 OTSO OTSO
2 TORQUE

Sunshine
(FTI, Taguig) tel 838.4301 loc. 3376
1 KASIPING
2 DEVIL IN THE DEEP
3
4

GOTESCO CINEMA

Gotesco City
(Manila) tel 734.8588
RESERVE
5
6
7
8
9

Gotesco Grand Central
(Caloocan) tel 364.3781
1 KARIBAL
2 OTSO OTSO
3 SCOOBY DOO-2
4 PASSION OF THE CHRIST
5 HOUSE OF THE DEAD
6 PASSION OF THE CHRIST
7 GRUDGE-2
8 SORUK
9 HIGHWAY MEN

Gotesco Commonwealth
tel 951.0083
1 RESERVE
2
3
4
5

Gotesco Ortigas
tel 656 6795
1 HIGHWAY MEN
2 OTSO OTSO
3 HOUSE OF THE DEAD
4 KASIPING
5 SCOOBY DOO-2

Universal
(Manila) tel 733.2470
1 RESERVE

Dilson
(Manila) tel 734.7724
Dilson THE LOVER
Lords GOOD LAWYERS WIFE

Mandaluyong
tel 533.3851 , 533.3856
1 PASSION OF THE CHRIST
2 OTSO OTSO
3 HOUSE OF THE DEAD
4

Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto SUPER CINERAMA
tel 733.4238
1 PASSION OF THE CHRIST
2 HIGHWAY MEN
3 KARIBAL
4 HOUSE OF THE DEAD
5 RESERVE

Berma Cinema
(Baclaran) tel 879.2030 , 879.2029
1 PASSION OF CHRIST
2 OTSO OTSO

THE CENTER OF ENTERTAINMENT **Araneta Center**

ALI MALL CINEPLEX
1 CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
2 CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
3 PASSION OF CHRIST
4 PASSION OF CHRIST
5 HOUSE OF THE DEAD
6 HIGHWAY MEN
7 OTSO OTSO

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03
1 PASSION OF CHRIST
2 PASSION OF CHRIST
3 50 FIRST DATE
4 BUTTERFLY EFFECTS

Cine Nepo
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.0121
1 50 FIRST DATE
2 PASSION OF CHRIST
3 SCOOBY DOO-2
4 PASSION OF CHRIST

Cine Nepo
(Dagupan City) tel (075) 515.8489
1 OTSO OTSO
2 THE CURSE
3 CHEAPER BY THE DOOZEN
4 TORQUE

CINEMA 2000

Cinema 2000 Target Mall
(Sta. Rosa, Laguna) tel (049) 837.0926
1 PASSION OF CHRIST
2 HIDALGO
3 GRUDGE

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383
1 GRUDGE-2
2 HIDALGO
3 PASSION OF CHRIST
4 PASSION OF CHRIST

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall
(Binan) tel (049) 411.1146
1 THE GRUDGE-2
2 PASSION OF CHRIST
3 PASSION OF CHRIST
4 HIDALGO

Cinema 2000 Cinemagix
(Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771
1 CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN
2 OTSO OTSO
3 TORQUE

Cinema 2000 Metrotown
(Tarlac) tel (045) 982.1729
1 50 FIRST DATE
2 OTSO OTSO
3 WATER DEMON
4 LOVE ACTUALLY

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Plaridel) tel (044) 795-332
1 SCOOBY DOO-2
2 OTSO OTSO
3 FIRST DATE

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276
1 SORUK
2 KASIPING
3 DUWAG LANG ANG SUMUSUKO
4 DEATH CURSE

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545 7202
1 HIDALGO
2 KASIPING
3 PASSION OF CHRIS
4 GRUDGE-
5 THE CURSE

Olivarez Tri-Cinema
(Binan) tel (049) 511.8883
1 PASSION OF CHRIST
2 KASIPING

Olivarez Los Baños
tel (049) 249.2558
1
2 HOUSE
3 KASIPING

Mega Center Mall
(Cabanatuan City) tel (044) 463.3283
1 HAUNTED
2 KARIBAL
3 CHEAP
4

Cabuyao
(Laguna City) tel 520 8914
1 RESERVE

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981 0790
1
2
3 BUTT
4

Emperor
(Rosario Cavite) tel (046) 438.1657
1
2

*Movies are subject to change without prior notice

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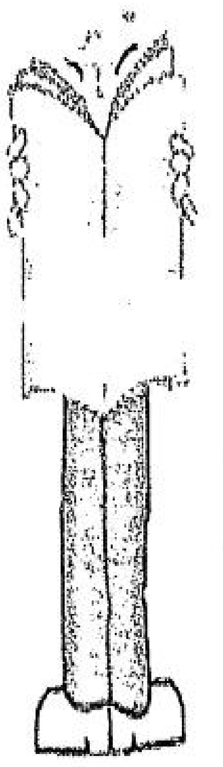
Festival Supermall
Filinvest - Alabang
Tel 85035-71 to 72
Schedule subject to change without prior notice

SCOOBY-DOO 2
NOW SHOWING



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DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX

For inquiries, call:
687-6963 • 687-6972

RESERVED SEATING

MOVIES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

1	THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST	12:30, 3:30, 6:30, 9:30 PG-13
2	THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST	1:00, 4:00, 7:00, 10:00 PG-13
3	THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST	10:30, 1:30, 4:30, 7:30, 10:30 PG-13
4	SCOOBY-DOO 2	11:50, 1:55, 4:00 6:05, 8:10, 10:15 GP

THEATRE MALL
GREENHILLS

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DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX

NOW SHOWING

CINEMA 1	PASSION OF THE CHRIST	10:50, 1:30, 4:15, 7:00, 9:50 P13
CINEMA 2	PASSION OF THE CHRIST	11:20, 2:05, 4:50, 7:35, 10:30 P13

Special screening of
PASSION OF THE CHRIST on Holy Thursday.

Advance ticket purchase for PASSION OF THE CHRIST is also available. • 722 4496
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Araneta Center
ENTERTAINMENT GUIDE

ALI MALL CINEPLEX

Ali 3	PASSION OF THE CHRIST
Ali 4	PASSION OF THE CHRIST
Ali 5	HOUSE OF THE DEAD
Ali 6	HIGHWAYMEN
Ali 7	OTSO OTSO

NEW FIESTA CARNIVAL
Open Daily 4 PM to 10 PM

ARANETA COLISEUM

APR 1	NCA 7-COCK DERBY
APR 4	PBA: GINEBRA VS. TALK 'N' TEXT
APR 8	OLPH RETREAT (7AM)/ SHALOM (1PM)
APR 9	OLPH RETREAT (7AM)/ SHALOM (1PM)
APR 10	OLPH RETREAT (7AM)/ SHALOM (2PM)
APR 11	PBA: FED EX VS. RED BULL
APR 13	NCA 7-COCK DERBY
APR 14	PBA: PUREFOODS VS. RED BULL
APR 15	NCA 7-COCK DERBY

For tickets, call TicketNet at 911-5555

POWER PLANT CINEMA

Rockwell Center, Makati City ☎ Tel. No: 8981440-41

DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX

SCOOBY DOO 2 GP 11:40, 1:40, 3:40, 5:40, 7:40, 9:40	THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST PG13 12:30, 3:10, 5:50, 8:30	THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST PG13 1:10, 3:50, 6:30, 9:10
THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST PG13 11:10, 1:50, 4:30, 7:10, 9:50	50 FIRST DATES PG13 12:05, 2:00, 3:55, 5:50, 7:55, 10:00	THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST PG13 11:50, 2:30, 5:10, 7:50, 10:30

MATINEE P80.00 - FREE SEATING - SCREENINGS BEFORE 5 PM - MON. TO FRI.

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Per DTI Permit No. AI-212 Series of 2004

THEATER MOVIE GUIDE

MANILA

EASTERN	
MAXIM	CLOSED
MIRAMAR	SEX BOMB / RAMPADORA
ODEON	X-MEN 2
ODEON-2	BUKID AY BASA / KASIBULAN
ROBEN	BOLD STAR
TANDEM-1	SUGAT
TANDEM-2	KATAWAN MO LANGIT KO
TIMES	SPY / LEGEND OF CROCODILE

QUEZON CITY

ACT-1	SENSUAL ISLAND
ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3	ORIGINAL SIN
ACT-4	HANGGANG KAILAN KA PAPATAY
CORONET A	THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST
CORONET B	A MAN APART
QUEZON-1	BERTUD NG PUTIK
REMAR	X-MEN 2
REMAR-2	BOLD STAR

NOVA MALL - NOVALICHES CINEMA

A	KASIPING
B	CLOSED
C	

MANDALUYONG CITY

SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA-1	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
CINEMA-2	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION

CAINTA RIZAL

STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-5401 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	OTSO OTSO
CINEMA-2	KARIBAL
CINEMA-3	MAGNIFICO
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	PASSION OF THE CHRIST
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	HAUNTED OFFICE
CINEMA-6	GRUDGE 2
CINEMA-7	TORQUE
CINEMA-8	HIGHWAYMEN
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	PASSION OF THE CHRIST
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	PASSION OR THE CHRIST
CINEMA-11 (SDDS)	PASSION OF THE CHRIST
CINEMA-12	SCOOBY DOO 2
CINEMA-14	HOUSE OF THE DEAD
CINEMA-15	50 FIRST DATES

LORES

CINEMA-2	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-3	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT

NE CINEMAGIC - CABANATUAN

(LAS PINAS)	THE CURSE
CINEMA-1	OTSO OTSO
CINEMA-2	CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN
CINEMA-4	DRAGON VS. NINJA

UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL

(PARANAQUE)	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-1	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
CINEMA-2	MEN IN BLACK II
CINEMA-4	SELDA

3RD WEEK

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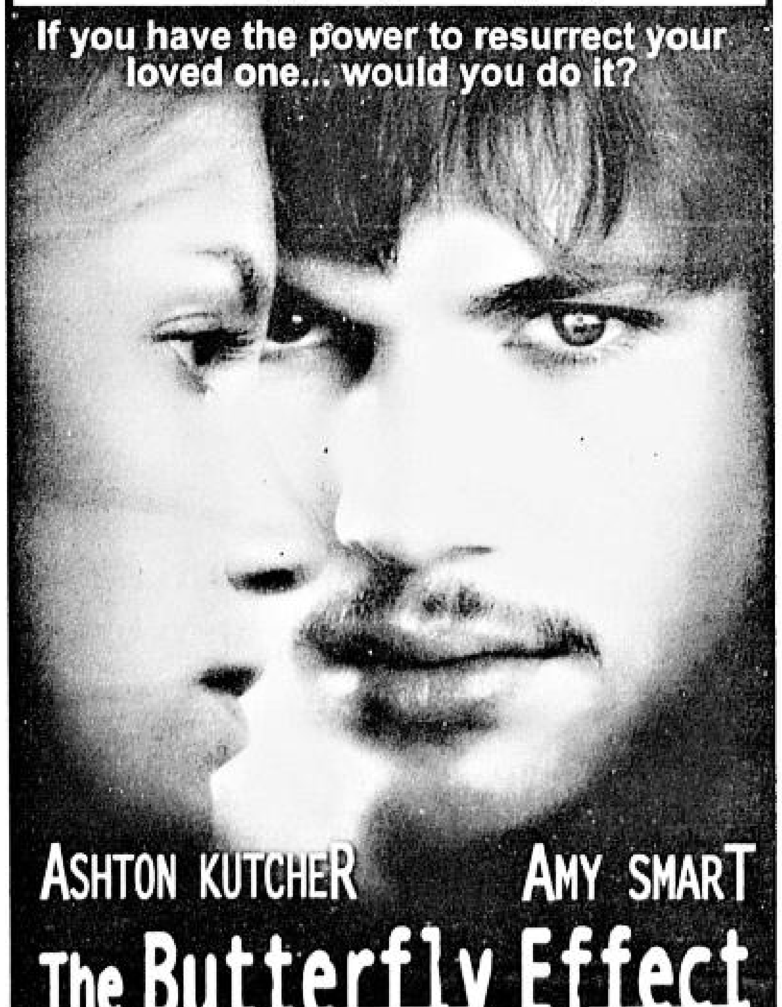
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Family Consumers Choice Award 2003

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GALLERIA
632-9115 to 16 / 687-0593

CINEMA 1 THX	THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST	11:50, 2:30, 5:10, 7:50, 10:30
2	THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST	11:20, 2.00, 4:40, 7:20, 10:00
3	SCOOBY DOO 2	10:50, 1.00, 3.10, 5:20, 7:30, 9:40
4	50 FIRST DATES	11:10, 1:20, 3:30, 5:40, 7.50, 10.00
5	THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST	10:50, 1:30, 4:10, 6.50, 9.30
6	THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST	12:30, 3:20, 6:10, 9:00
7	DON'T TEMPT ME	11:55, 2:05, 4:15, 6.25, 8:35, 10.30
8	LOVE ACTUALLY	10.40, 1:25, 4 10, 6 55, 9 40
9	HOUSE OF THE DEAD	10.50, 1:00, 3 10, 5:20, 7:30
10	THE BUTTERFLY EFFECT	11:55 2:05, 4:15, 6 25, 8 35, 10:30

MATINEE: Monday to Friday/ 10 am-4pm except holidays
Matinee Price: P100 THX cinema / P80 for one level cinemas
Regular Price: P130 THX / P95/65 for two levels cinemas / P95 for one level cinemas

ERMITA
526-7185 / 536-7809 to 12

1	THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST	11:10, 1:50, 4.30, 7:10, 10:00
2	SCOOBY DOO 2	10:15, 12 10, 2 05, 4 00, 5 55, 7.50, 9.50
3	DON'T TEMPT ME	11:25, 1.35, 3.45, 5.55, 8.00, 10.00
4	HOUSE OF THE DEAD	11.05, 1.10, 3.15, 5.20, 7.45, 9.40
5	THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST	10:30, 1:10, 3:50, 6:30, 9.20,
6	50 FIRST DATES	10.50, 1.00, 3.10, 5 20, 7.30, 9:50
7	THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST	10:30, 1:10, 3:50, 6:30, 9 20

Big R Supercenter METRO EAST
682-8193/99 / 682-8280

1	HOUSE OF THE DEAD	11:50, 2:10, 4:30, 6:50, 9:10
2	THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST	10:15, 1:20, 4:25, 7:30, 10:30
3	THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST	10:15, 1 20, 4 25, 7 30, 10 30
4	50 FIRST DATES	10:50, 12:50, 2.50, 4:50, 6:50, 9:00
5	SCOOBY DOO 2	10.50, 12.50, 2:50, 4:50, 6:50, 9:00
6	THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST	10 15, 1 50, 4.55, 8.00
7	THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST	10:15, 1:50, 4:55, 8 00
8	OTSO-OTSO	11:00, 1.00, 3.00, 5.00, 7.00, 9:00

Big R Supercenter NOVALICHES / FAIRVIEW
935-3229 / 31

1	THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST	10:10, 12:50, 3:30, 6:10, 8:50
2	THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST	10:10, 12.50, 3:30, 6:10, 8:50
3	HOUSE OF THE DEAD	12:00, 2:00, 4:00, 6 00, 8 00
4	THE GRUDGE 2	12.00, 2.00, 4:00, 6:00, 8 00
5	THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST	11:30, 2.10, 4.50, 7:30
6	SCOOBY DOO 2	11:25, 1.15, 3.05, 4:55, 6:45, 8:35
7	50 FIRST DATES	11:25, 1:15, 3:05, 4.55, 6:45, 8:35
8	OTSO-OTSO	11:45, 1:55, 4 05, 6.15, 8.30

Citisquare MALABON
288-0985/2575

1	SCOOBY DOO 2
2	OTSO-OTSO
3	THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST
4	THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST

big Supercenter CAINTA
240-4661

1	THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST
2	OTSO-OTSO
3	SCOOBY DOO 2
4	THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST

Big R Supercenter STA. ROSA
Laguna (049)837-0907

1	THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST
2	THE CURSE
3	SCOOBY DOO 2
4	THE GRUDGE 2
5	HIDALGO

Big R Supercenter LIPA
757-3664 / 312-5870

1	50 FIRST DATES
2	OTSO-OTSO
3	THE BUTTERFLY EFFECT
4	KARIBAL
5	SCOOBY DOO 2

Big R Supercenter DASMARIÑAS
852-2125

1	SCOOBY DOO 2
2	THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST
3	THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST
4	OTSO-OTSO
5	50 FIRST DATES

Big R Supercenter STARMILLS
Sn Fernando, Pampanga
875-1027 / 961-5270

1	50 FIRST DATES
2	THE BUTTERFLY EFFECT
3	SCOOBY DOO 2
4	THE NIGHTMARE
5	THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST
6	THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST

IMUS
471-8188 / 875-5858

1	THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST
2	THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST
3	SCOOBY DOO 2
4	HOUSE OF THE DEAD
5	OTSO-OTSO
6	HIGHWAYMEN

BACOLOD
441-0458/59

1	TORQUE
2	HIDALGO
3	LOVE ACTUALLY
4	GOTHIKA
5	SCOOBY DOO 2
6	OTSO-OTSO

ILOILO
336-8070/78

1	TORQUE
2	GOTHIKA
3	LOVE ACTUALLY
4	THE NIGHTMARE
5	BONE SNATCHER
6	SCOOBY DOO 2

THE PASSION

See it at its BEST

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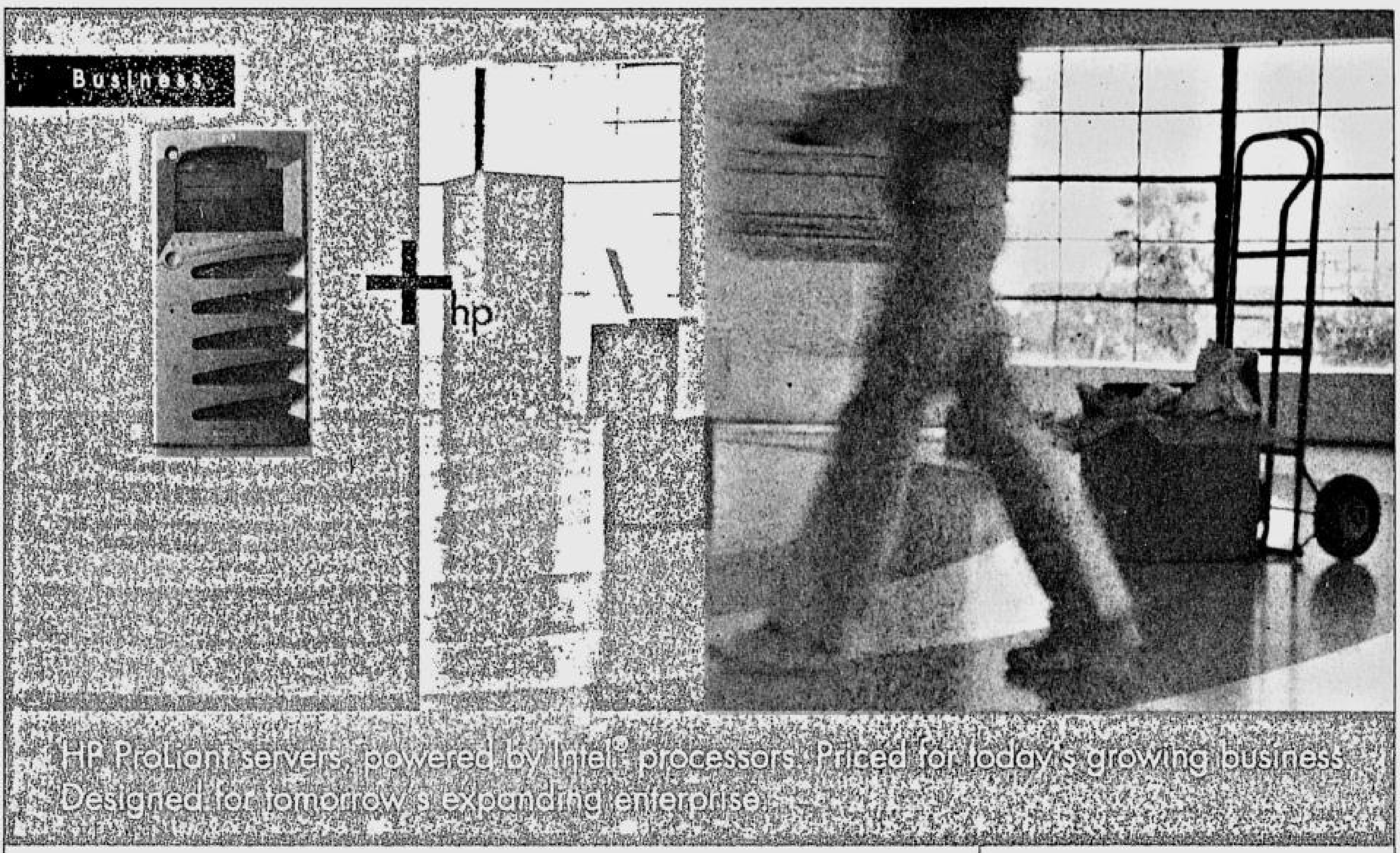
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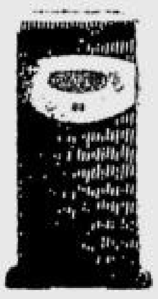

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BSP raises $500-M loan; peso rallies

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE BANGKO Sentral ng Pilipinas yesterday accepted a fresh $500-million loan offered by a syndicate of seven foreign banks, completing its refinancing requirements for this year and giving a big psychological boost to the peso.

The expected inflow from the new loan, which will significantly contribute to the BSP's gross international reserves, lifted the peso to a six-week high yesterday. The local currency closed at 56.14 or a single-day gain of 16 centavos from Tuesday's 56.30 against the dollar.

BSP Deputy Governor Amando Tetangco attributed the peso's sharp gains yesterday to "significant selling interest from banks after the yen appreciated at noontime."

The volume of transactions at the Philippine Dealing System amounted to $164 million yesterday.

"We also saw OFW (remittances) and equity inflow. Plus there was no sizeable demand (for dollars)," Tetangco added.

The BSP's decision to push through with a $500-million fund-raising timely aided the local currency, which had fallen to a record low of 56.45 to the dollar in recent weeks due to the market's concerns on the country's dwindling GIR.

The group of banks which extended a fresh credit line to the BSP consisted of the Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corp. Ltd., HSH Nordbank AG, Standard Chartered Bank, Mizuho Financial Group, Sumitomo Mitsui Banking Corp., DBS Bank Ltd. And Mitsubishi Securities (HK) Ltd., the BSP announced in a press statement.

Tetangco said the BSP would be able to get the loan proceeds "within April."

Asked why the loan deal was pursued a few days after BSP Governor Rafael Buenaventura said the borrowing would be put off to give way to other public sector borrowers, Tetangco said there was appetite among lenders.

"We asked the banks if it would affect the fund-raising of other government agencies. They said it won't, so we went ahead," Tetangco said.

Otherwise, he said the BSP would have been willing to wait until other public sector borrowers had completed their own requirements.

Napocor issues ₱12-B bonds

By Michelle V. Remo

NATIONAL Power Corp. has issued P12.05 billion worth of zero coupon bonds, the proceeds of which will be used to help meet its financing requirement for the year.

Napocor, which earlier said it would need $1.8 billion to finance all of its scheduled expenditures this year, said the money to be raised from the bond offering would be used to cover its debt servicing, importation, and build-operate-transfer fees claimed by its contractors.

Of the P12 billion, P3.75 billion worth of zero coupon bonds will mature in 2009, while the remaining P8.3 billion will mature in 2011.

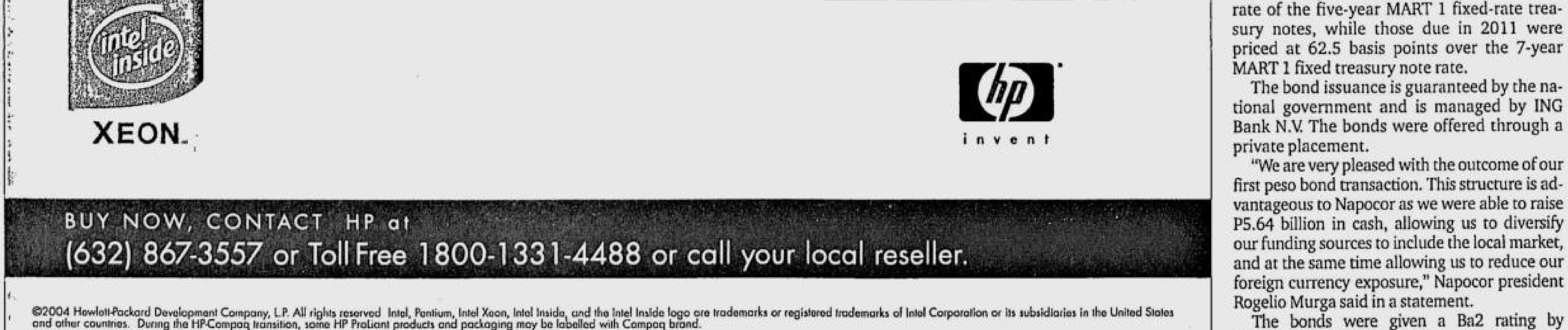
Napocor reported that the bond issuance was oversubscribed by 40 percent, indicating strong demand from investors.

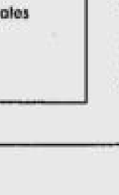
The zero coupon bonds that will mature in 2009 were priced at 50 basis points over the rate of the five-year MART 1 fixed-rate treasury notes, while those due in 2011 were priced at 62.5 basis points over the 7-year MART 1 fixed treasury note rate.

The bond issuance is guaranteed by the national government and is managed by ING Bank N.V. The bonds were offered through a private placement.

"We are very pleased with the outcome of our first peso bond transaction. This structure is advantageous to Napocor as we were able to raise P5.64 billion in cash, allowing us to diversify our funding sources to include the local market, and at the same time allowing us to reduce our foreign currency exposure," Napocor president Rogelio Murga said in a statement.

The bonds were given a Ba2 rating by Moody's Investors Service. The rating is the same with what Moody's has given to the Philippines.


"Buti na lang, Prestone ang brake fluid ko."



Nasa mabuti kang kamay.

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For feedback, text us at (0919)880-33-54
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Editor **Chelo Banal-Formoso**

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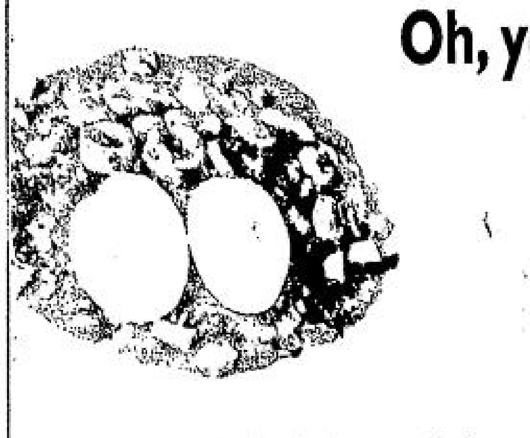
Oh, yes, let's eat



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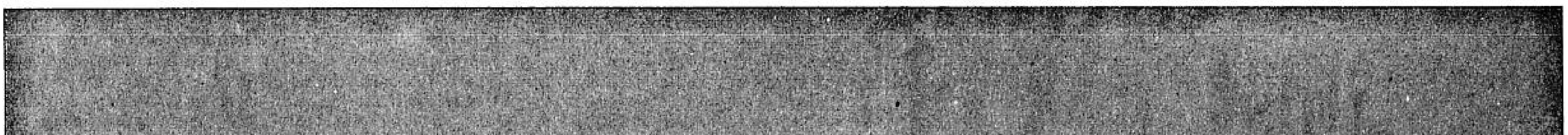
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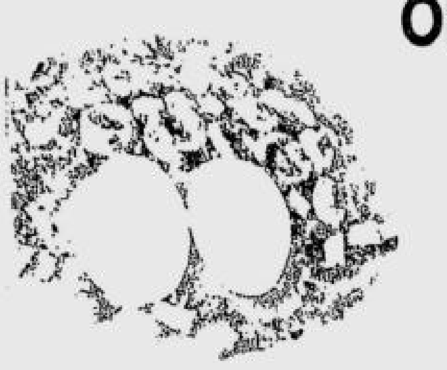

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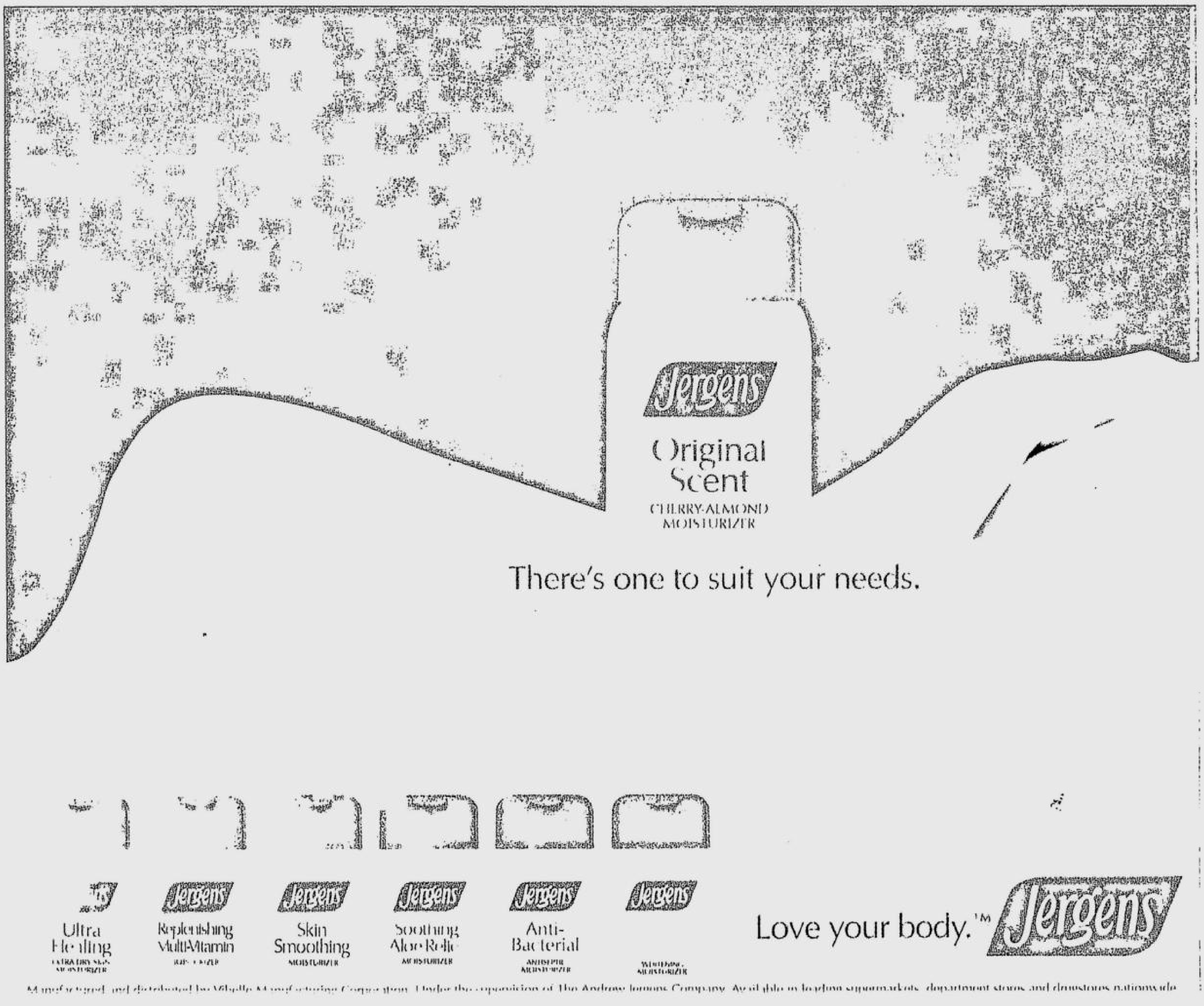

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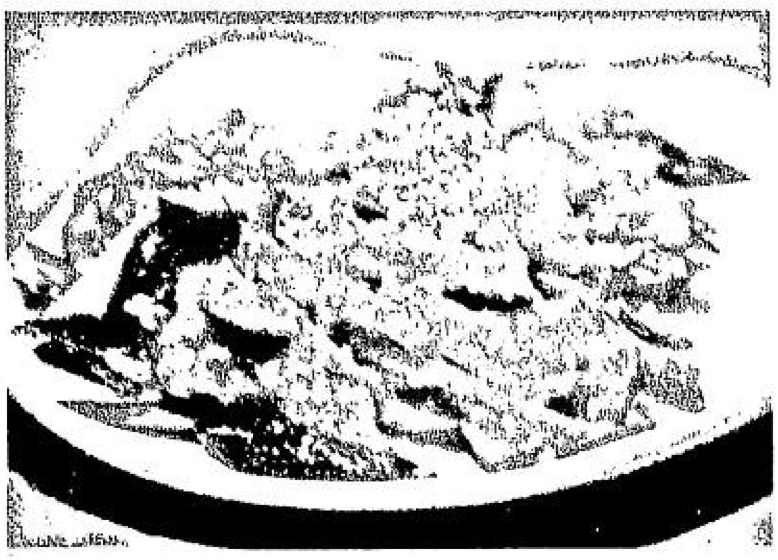

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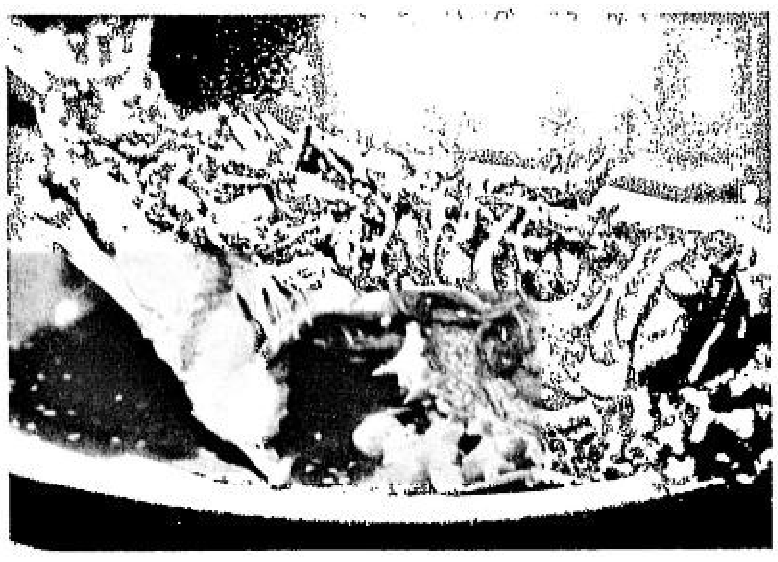

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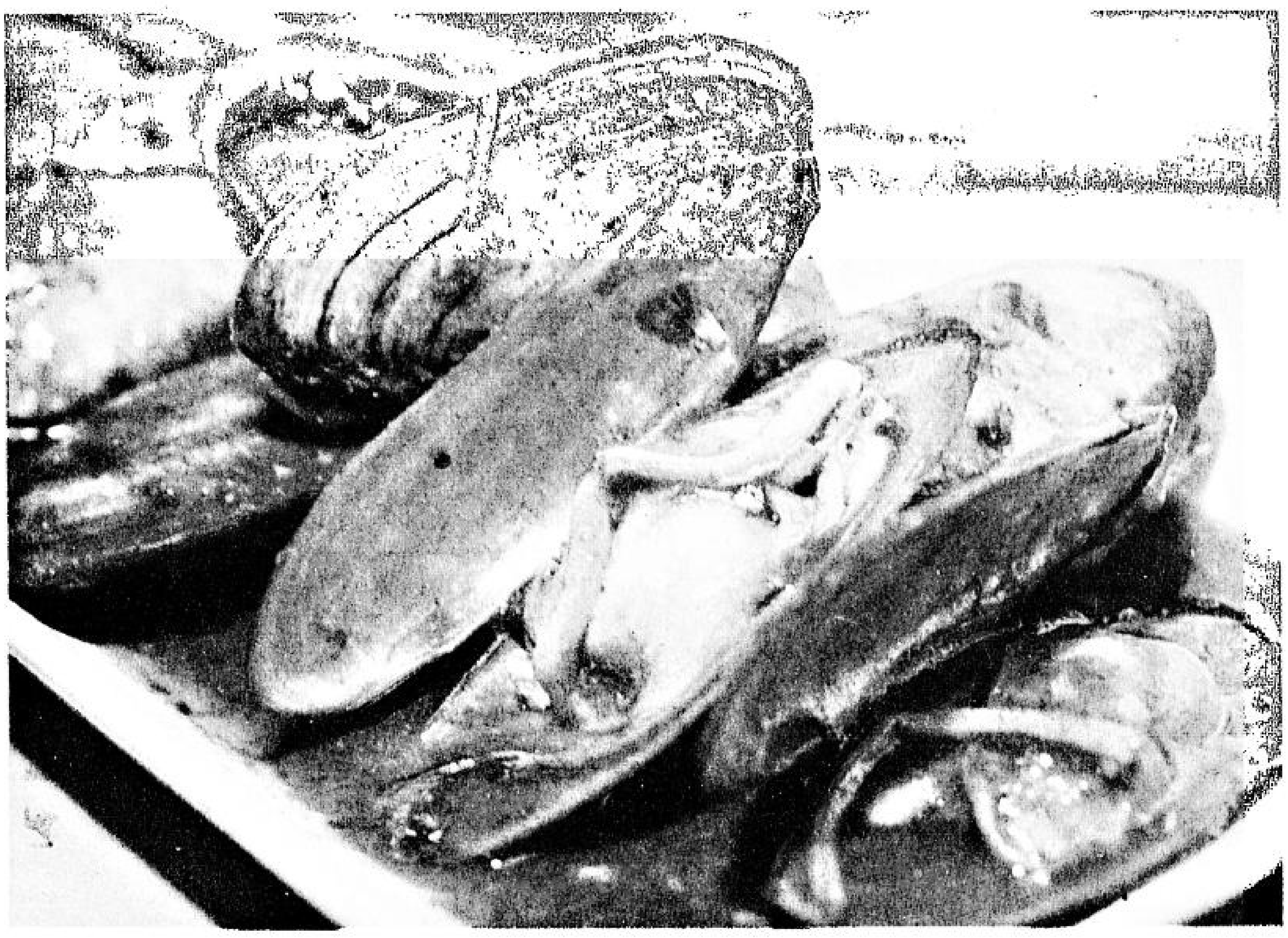

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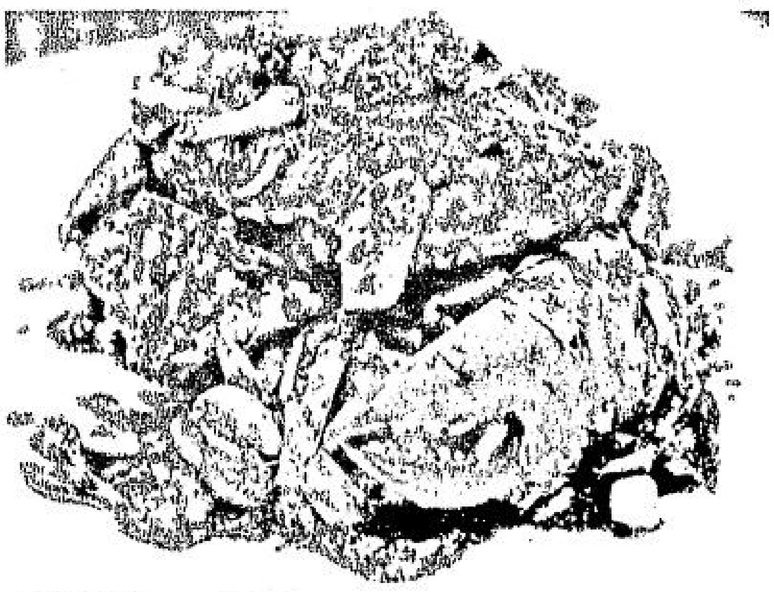
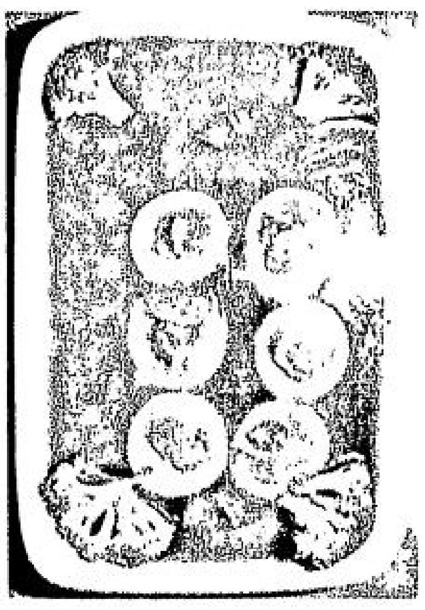


TWISTER **Fragrant Crab**

The Lenten season does not mean food has to be unexciting



GOLDEN **Beancurd, steamed Japanese tofu and egg foam with seafood paste topped with golden egg yolk and oyster sauce**

Spice up your dining this Lent

Text by Anne A. Jambora
Photos by Randy Hormillosa

A NEW restaurant on the pricey The Fort might just have the zing to make dining out during the Lenten season a whole new experience. And the price tag is surprisingly affordable.

Palm Beach Seafood Restaurant offers not the usual seafood recipes people have come to expect—even are resigned to get—during this season.

With dishes prepared in the authentic fiery Singaporean way, diners will literally have a hot time at the restaurant.

"We just built a better area for [our customers] and charge them casual dining prices, or a third of the amount it usually costs to dine in this area," says Palm Beach's young managing director, Vincent Y. Cheng. Instead of forking out P1,000 per person, for instance, diners only pay P200-300 each.

It's in the sauce

Located at Unit A, Entertainment Center of The Fort in Taguig, Cheng says the restaurant offers authentic hot Singaporean cuisine, not "Filipinized" recipes. That the establishment is a franchisee of Palm Beach Seafood Restaurant Singapore may be one reason for its genuine flavor. The two Singaporean chefs in the kitchen also makes sure they remain true to the original flavors. But the real trick in ensuring authenticity in taste is in the sauce.

"Our sauces are imported from Singapore so we can't adjust anything. What you taste in Singapore you taste here," Cheng says. Not that Cheng and his business partners would want it any other way.

He says the restaurant aims to make Filipinos understand unique Singaporean fare—know the food, learn the culture that's a mix of Malay, Chinese and Indian, lovers of fiery foods all.

It's the complete dining experience that counts, and if that means hot dishes that can clear the sinuses then so be it. So far, however, almost no one has complained about the spiciness of Palm Beach's dishes since it opened in December. "We are glad to have plenty of repeat customers already. That means they like the food and the place," Cheng says.

Taste of home

And the restaurant has a sizeable and regular Singaporean clientele, Cheng says, who obviously knows of the place from back home. "They know the name, are familiar with [the resto] in Singapore, and when they come here the food tastes the same."

When Cheng and his partners searched for a food establishment to introduce in the country, the choice of the popular Palm Beach Seafood Restaurant was a no-brainer. "We found this place in Singapore that's been there since 1956. How could you go wrong with their food? [The restaurant] moves from [one location to the other] and still people flock to the establishment," says Cheng.

The bestsellers so far are crab, fish and prawn entrées—available live and cooked fresh. The spicy crabs are prepared two ways—soaked in chili or black pepper—depending on choice and taste. Either way, both items are flaming hot. If that's not enough, there's always the Twister Fragrant Crab. Chili crabs are stir-fried with garlic, sugar, tomato sauce, chili and eggs. They come with a sauce good enough to be daintily wiped off the plate with a bun.

"My chefs were shocked and amazed at how we eat. Singaporeans eat the bun, not the rice. Here in the Philippines there's the food, rice, *may buns pa*!"

Blending two cultures

Fish are best tried Honey Tangy or Nonya, the latter being the closest thing to indigenous Singaporean food, combining Chinese ingredients with Malay spices and herbs, chili, belacan (prawn paste) and coconut milk—producing a flavor that blends two cultures and culinary styles.

Appetizers are becoming popular, too, especially the Crispy Baby Squid and Achar (pickled carrots and cucumber with pineapple in chili, peanut and sesame seed). Dried items are the sweetish Oat Prawns, prepared with Quaker Oatmeal; and Milk Prawns, cooked with milk.

Since the market demands a little variety, Cheng says they also serve meat items. A unique entry is the Coffee Pork Ribs, orange-infused baby back ribs marinated in Palm Beach's own coffee mix. Very Chinese, and truly a healthy treat, is the Herbal Chicken, an exclusive item prepared for two hours in a claypot with Chinese herbs and spices then served piping hot.

Not content with Ginger Frog Legs on its menu and breaded frog legs deep-fried with wine in ginger bedding, Cheng wants to bring in as well the exotic steamed frogs, to be served in their glorious wholeness—limbs, body, head and all. But until he can find live frogs, that expensive item will remain on his wish list.

"Every month we'll bring in new items until we get the full menu that we want. When you maintain your uniqueness, you maintain your market. I believe in our food. I think it will sell. Location is not a problem," he says.

E-mail the author at ajambora@inquirer.com.ph

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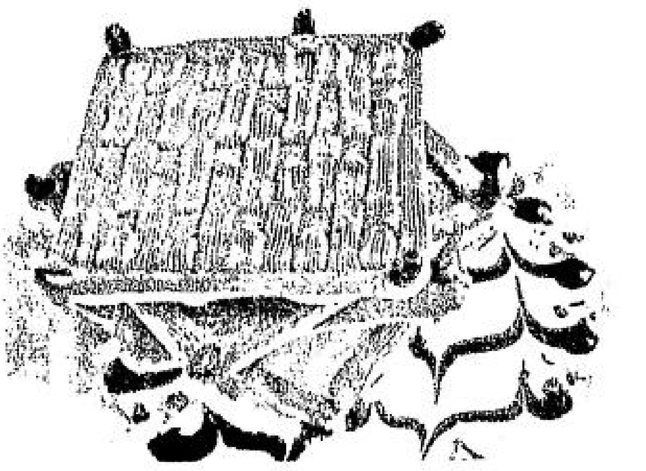

1771 Restaurant presents sweet treats such as Coffee Bean Sans Rival, Lemon Meringue Torte, Coffee Pie and Triple Chocolate Mousse. Visit Chateau 1771 at El Pueblo, ADB Ave. cor. J. Vargas Ave., Ortigas Center, Pasig, tel. 6317341; Portico 1771, 1771 M. Adriatico St., Malate, Manila, 5232063; Sentro 1771, level 2, Greenbelt 3, Ayala Center, Makati, 7573940.

Savor dishes perfect for Holy Week

From page C4

Plate, Squid Ring Bowl. All rice bowls, rice plates and sizzling plates at Jumbo Japs Express come with an upgrade option to Japanese Fried Rice or Chicken Kamameshi Rice. Diners can avail of a free religious theme calendar for every purchase of Sizzling Fish Plate, large iced tea and Buko Pandan Jelly.

HEN Lin's Lenten specials include Fish Congee (P59), Sweet and Sour Fish Fillet with rice (P59) and Boneless Bangus with rice (P65).

POPEYES' seafood meals are served with regular iced tea or softdrink. These are Popcorn Shrimp with tartar sauce dipped in special batter and Squid Rings with a mild New Orleans flavor. Meals are served with rice or side dishes of Cajun-flavored mashed potatoes, Cajun rice or coleslaw.

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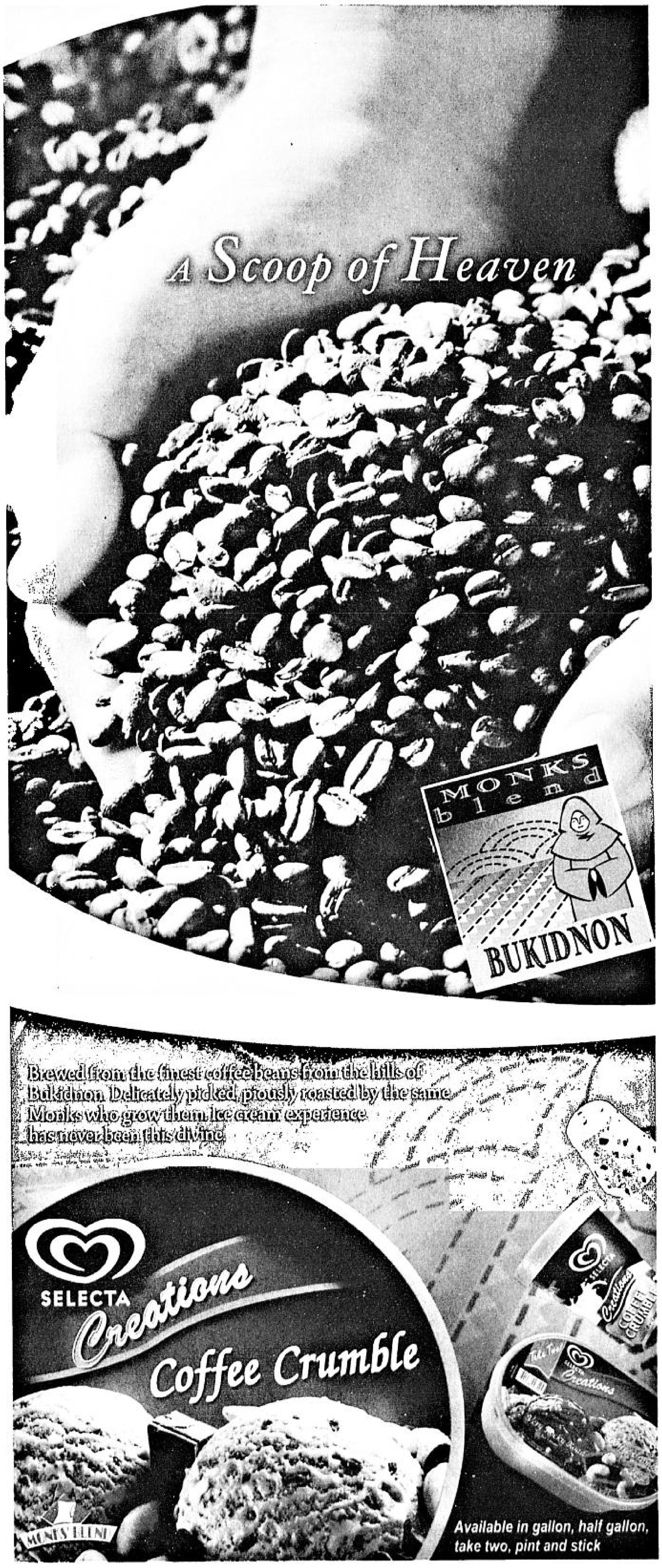
Mr. Quickie., Reader's Delight, HMI Medical Center
Associated Trading Corp., ACE Optical, Time Collection,
Hello Beauty, Tupperware, In and Out Wear, Salon de Plantassy

Pizza Hut

Per DTI-NCR Permit No. AI-190 series of 2004

EXHIBITS NETWORK



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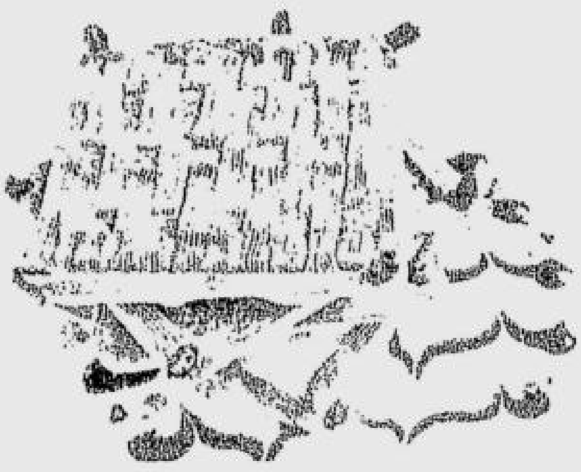
CRAVINGS offers Tuna ala Nicoise (pan-seared tuna fillet seasoned with herbs and spices, with chunky tomato-based sauce, black olives, strips of green and red bell pepper and served with spaghetti), Fish Fillet with Green Tea and Tamarind Sauce, Tuna Salad Panini, Baked Fish in Olive Oil, Lapu-Lapu with Spicy Basil Sauce and Bangus Belly with Garlic. Call 4266681 or 4264838.



1771 Restaurant presents sweet treats such as Coffee Bean Sans Rival, Lemon Meringue Torte, Coffee Pie and Triple Chocolate Mousse. Visit Chateau 1771 at El Pueblo, ADB Ave. cor. J. Vargas Ave., Ortigas Center, Pasig, tel. 6317341; Portico 1771, 1771 M. Adriatico St., Malate, Manila, 5232063; Sentro 1771, level 2, Greenbelt 3, Ayala Center, Makati, 7573940.

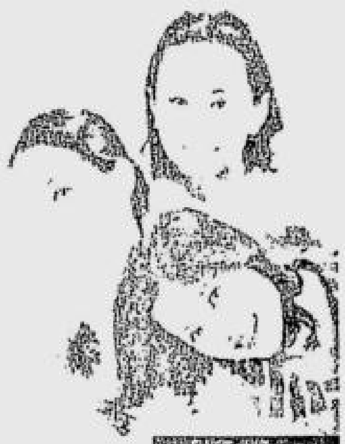
Savor dishes perfect for Holy Week

From page C4

Plate, Squid Ring Bowl. All rice bowls, rice plates and sizzling plates at Jumbo Japs Express come with an upgrade option to Japanese Fried Rice or Chicken Kamameshi Rice. Diners can avail of a free religious theme calendar for every purchase of Sizzling Fish Plate, large iced tea and Buko Pandan Jelly.

HEN Lin's Lenten specials include Fish Congee (P59), Sweet and Sour Fish Fillet with rice (P59) and Boneless Bangus with rice (P65).

POPEYES' seafood meals are served with regular iced tea or softdrink. These are Popcorn Shrimp with tartar sauce dipped in special batter and Squid Rings with a mild New Orleans flavor. Meals are served with rice or side dishes of Cajun-flavored mashed potatoes, Cajun rice or coleslaw.



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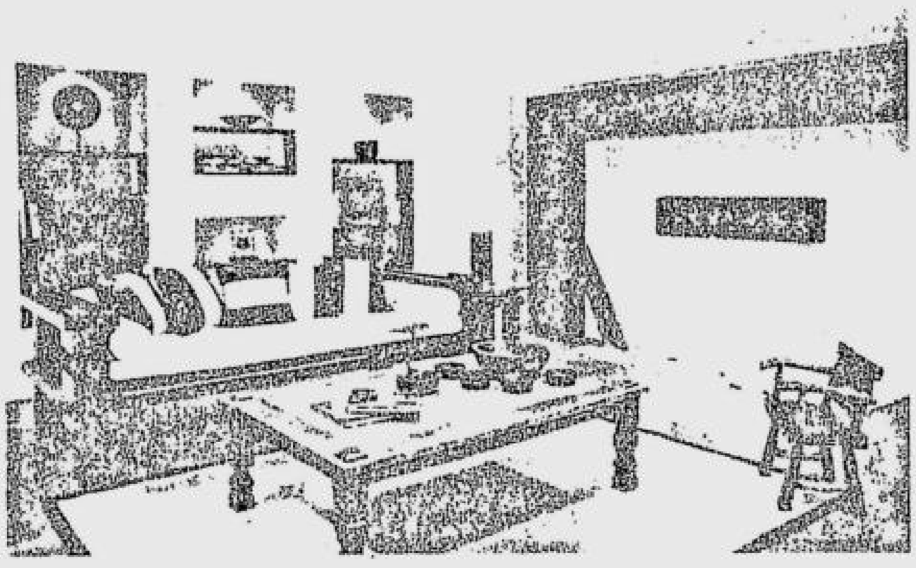

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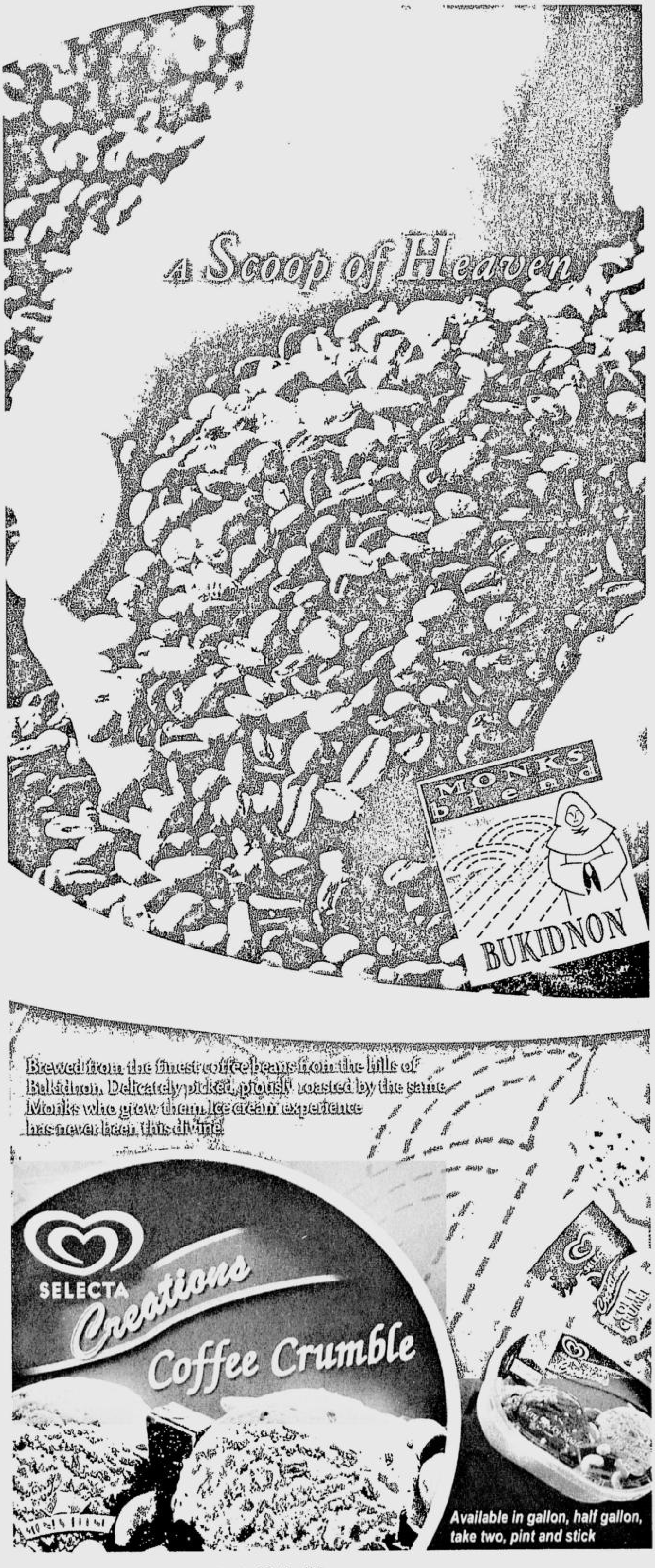
Pizza Hut



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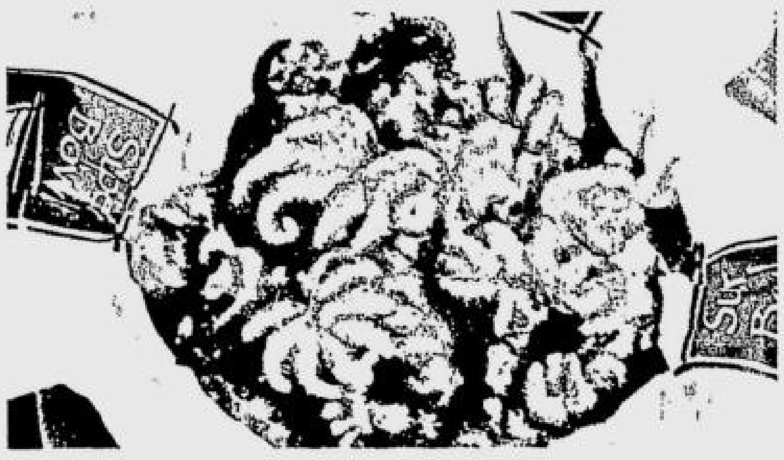
Savor dishes perfect for Holy Week



SUPER Bowl's crispy breaded Baby Octopus

DINING OUT

SUPER Bowl of China and Big Buddha Restaurant offer three dishes for Lent. These are Steamed Catfish with Black Bean Sauce or Light Soy Sauce topped with shredded onions, ginger and bell peppers; Fish Chips with two variants like Plain Salted and Breaded; and breaded and deep-fried Baby Octopus flavored with spices and served with Thai sauce. Super Bowl of China is located at Megastrip of Megamall; Jupiter St. in Makati; Glorietta 4 in Ayala Center; Chefs Avenue in Alabang Town Center; and at the 2nd level of SM City North Edsa. Big Buddha Restaurant is located at the 2nd level of Greenbelt 3 in Makati.

MOCHA Blends, in observance of the Lenten season, offers a seafood special, Creamy Crab on Toast. The sandwich is filled with crab slices, cream cheese, yoghurt and a selection of spices. It is served with chips. Other Lenten specials are Daing na Bangus, Tuna Melt and Tuna con Tomato Pasta. All meals are served with a choice of Mocha Blends' Black Cafe Italiano or House Blend Iced Tea—a must with every meal. Mocha Blends now has 24 branches in Metro Manila, north and south Luzon. Call 4100774.

JUMBO Japs Express at SM North Edsa features seafood items for Lent. These are Fish and Prawn Tempura Plates, Sizzling Fish

SAVOR/ C3

YOSHINOYA features dishes for Lent. These are Ebi Fry (deep-fried prawns coated with Japanese bread crumbs, served on top of white rice) and Oriental Salad (strips of tuna fillet on a bed of fresh lettuce, onions and tomatoes, marinated in black bean dressing). These dishes can be paired with a side order of Yoshinoya's savory Macaroni Salad, or capped off with a choice of either Fruit Salad, Coffee Jelly or Yoshinoya's own green iced tea, a specially formulated beverage that's a unique alternative to soft drinks. Yoshinoya is located at Park Square I, Ayala Center, Megamall, SM North Edsa, Southmall and Robinsons Galleria.

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LIFESTYLE

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Meatless dishes for Lent and beyond

By Dorothy MJ Ferreria
Contributor

ALTHOUGH some of us now eat more fish for health reasons, there are others who still find it difficult to show any interest in non-meat dishes.

Here are some recipes for the Holy Week that may make meatless days more bearable for those who do not care much for fish. They might even decide to include these recipes in their menus even after Lent. We recommend pizza turnover, *kilawin* and *cardillo*.

Have a meaningful Holy Week.

Seafood Pizza Turnover (Calzone)

Crust:

1 tbsp active dry or instant yeast
1 tsp white sugar
½ c lukewarm water
3 c sifted all-purpose flour or bread flour
½ c lukewarm fresh milk
1½ tsp fine salt
2 tbsp olive oil or corn oil

Filling:

Olive oil
Salt
Boiled and peeled shrimps
Sliced canned button mushrooms
Boiled and shelled clams/mussels
Boiled and sliced squid
Well-drained pineapple chunks
Sliced onions, bell pepper and tomatoes
Slices of quick-melt cheese

Proof the yeast in a mixture of sugar and lukewarm water for 10 minutes. Add the rest of the ingredients and mix until well incorporated. Transfer the mixture to a floured surface and knead until smooth and elastic.

Let the dough rise in a greased bowl, covered with plastic wrap, for one hour.

Divide the dough into four portions. Roll out each portion into a 10-inch circle. Brush the surface of the dough with olive oil, leaving the edges free of oil. Salt lightly.

On half of the rolled dough, arrange layers of shrimps, mushrooms, pineapple, onions, cheese, etc.

Fold the dough covering the filling completely. The shape should resemble a giant *empanada*. Press the edges with the tines of a fork. Brush the surface of the dough with more olive oil. Trans-

MEATLESS/ D2

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Sylvia Reynoso-Gala
GOLD MEDALIST
Academia de Gastronomos
Madrid, Spain - 1964

ERNEST REYNOSO GALA
Graduate : Full Course at Thai Cooking School, Oriental Hotel, Bangkok, Thailand
Studied at Chopstick and Hongkong Town Gas Culinary Schools

Leni Reynoso-Araullo
Masters in Cake Decorating, Wilton School, Chicago, U.S.A., 1974 under Martha & Stanley Wilton
Graduate : Chicago School of Cooking and Catering
Graduate : Full Course, Thai Cooking School at the Oriental Hotel, Bangkok
Studied cooking in Europe, South America & Hongkong
Co-founder with Edna, Reynoso Cooking and Baking School, March, 1963

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APR 2 FRI 2:30 TO 6:15 PM
EASY BREAD-BAKING FOR WOULD BE BAKESHOP OWNERS! LEARN & EARN NOW! AMERICAN TASTY BREAD, MORELLA & ERNEST BIG PANDESAL, HONEY BREAD, BUTTER BREAD CHEESE BREAD SUPER-SOFT CARMELITE BREAD IN A BUNDT PAN P 980.
APR 13 TUE 2:30 TO 6:00 PM
POPULAR JAPANESE DISHES 1 DELICIOUS KAMAMESHI; YAKITORI; (JAPANESE CHICKEN BARBEQUE IN SKEWERS); TONKATSU (BREADED PORK CHOPS) GRILLED JAPANESE BEEFSTEAKS WITH BELLPEPPER AND MONGO SPROUTS; MISO SOUP SUNOMONO WITH DILIS, VERY DELICIOUS SUKIYAKI P 980
APR 14, 21, 28 CHILDREN'S COOKING & BAKING COURSE - 3 WED. 2:30 TO 5:30 PM P2,700 INCLUDING INGREDIENTS FOR CHILDREN AGES 6 TO 12 YEARS OLD. OVEN BAKED CHICKEN DRUMSTICKS & POTATOES SHRIMP ALA KING IN MUFFIN CUPS PARTY FRUITSALAD IN ICE CREAM CONES, CHEESE MACAROONS RAISIN WALNUT COOKIES, MEATLOAF SUPREME, YUMMY SPARERIBS W/ COLESLAW SALAD MAGNOLIA CHICKEN SPAGHETTI W/ MUSHROOMS PHILADELPHIA CREAM CHEESE CHEWY BARS, TINY FRUIT CAKE BARS CHOCO-PEANUTS IN PIE CRUST THIS COURSE IS GIVEN ONLY ONCE A YEAR BY ERNEST & SYLVIA IN MANILA. CALL WELLS FOR BAGUIO SCHEDULE. ONLY 30 STUDENTS WILL BE ACCOMMODATED. PAID RESERVATION IS A MUST. THANK YOU.
APR 15, 22, 29 MAY 6 - 4 THURS.
9:00 TO 5:00 PM MASTER COURSE IN CAKE DECORATING P2,900. INCLUDING INGREDIENTS LUNCH & SNACK (EXCEPT DECORATING MATERIALS LIKE PIPING BAGS TIPS ETC AVAILABLE FOR SALE AT THE CULINARY STUDIO OR BRING YOUR OWN) LESSON 1 FLUFFY BUTTER CREAM ICING TECHNIQUES IN COLORING BORDERS, SHELL ROPE, STAR LEAF ZIGZAG "E" MOTION FLEUR DE LIZ MAKE GARLANDS & SWAGS BASKET WEAVING LATTICE DESIGN 12 DIFFERENT DESIGNS FOR TOP & SIDES OF CAKE DIRECT PIPING OF CAKE OR ROSE BOUQUET SWEET PEA CARNATION LESSON 2 5 KINDS OF ICING INCLUDING MARSHMALLOW, ROYAL TO MAKE SUGAR FLOWERS ON NAILS TOOTHPICK FLORAL WIRE. LEARN SUGAR MOLDING CAKES, FAN BOOTIES, BASKET CRIB, HEART, MARY'S HEAD, THE LION KING, DVD MUSICAL DESIGN CAKE, 2 ADULT "SEXY" CAKES EACH STUDENT MUST BRING TRAY/BOX TO TAKE HOME CAKES
LESSON 3 MARZIPAN (FREE HAND) MOLDING AND PAINTING OF FRUITS FIGURES AND VEGETABLES LEARN THE MARZIPAN ROSE FIGURE AND FRUIT PIPING DECORATE DIFFERENT DESIGNS ON MUFFINS FOR INDIVIDUAL SERVINGS WHICH HOTELS AND LUXURY LINERS SERVE LESSON 4 HOW TO PREPARE DEBUTANT/ WEDDING CAKES TIERD STACKED, ETC EACH STUDENT WILL DESIGN AND DECORATE A WEDDING CAKE. (STYRO) TO BRING HOME PLS BRING TRAY/BOX BY LENI R. ARAULLO.
APR 16 FRI. 2:30 TO 5:30 PM
MONEY-MAKING PERFECT DOUGHNUTS! LEARN & DECORATE OVER 20 DIFFERENT TOPPINGS WITH FILLING PLUS BONUS RECIPES OF SPANISH CHURROS & THICK CHOCOLATE NO OVEN NOR SPECIAL EQUIPMENT REQUIRED P 980.
APR 18 SUN. 2:00 TO 5:00 PM
NEW MONEY-MAKING BACON & SAUSAGE 4 AMERICAN BACON CANADIAN BACON CHORIZO DE BILBAO GERMAN WHITE FISH SAUSAGE. LONGANIZA ILONGGA INCLUDES ACTUAL SMOKING METHOD BONUS MORCILLAS (SPANISH BLOOD SAUSAGE) BY LENI R. ARAULLO WHO TAUGHT AND SOLD HAM & SAUSAGES TO HOTELS & RESTAURANTS SINCE 1983. P980
APR 20 - TUE. - 2:30 TO 5:30 PM
POPULAR JAPANESE DISHES II. LEARN 8 DELICIOUS RECIPES! SHABU SHABU W/ 2 SAUCES ASSORTED CRISPY TEMPURA, GRILLED PORK AND BEEF SLICE UDONIVERY SPECIAL NOODLES) FRIED TOFUS IN SPECIAL SAUCE BREADED CHICKEN WINGS W/ VINEGAR SAUCE JAPANESE MIXED FRIED RICE PLUS BONUS RECIPES OF COMPLETE SUSHI BAR P 980.
APR 23 FRI 2:30 TO 5:45 PM
9 MONEY MAKING FOR TEENS & ADULT BEGINNERS; CHOCOLATE CRINKLES BUTTERSCOTCH BROWNIES LENGUA DE GATO CHEWY MALLOW BARS RUSSIAN TEA COOKIES VIRGIE PANTELEON'S DATE WALNUT COOKIES SPECIAL POLVORON LEBANESE DATE BOAT TARTS P 980.
APR 24 SAT 1:30 TO 5:00 PM -
CAKE DECORATING FOR BEGINNERS 14 YRS. OLD & ABOVE.USING WILTON'S CARTOON CHARACTER PANS ON REAL CAKES; SPONGE BOB BLUES CLUES WINNIE THE POOH, HAPPY DOG CHOO-CHOO TRAIN P980. (STAR & ROUND TIPS/ PIPING BAG AVAILABLE FOR SALE AT COST AT THE CULINARY STUDIO OR BRING YOUR OWN
BY: LENI R. ARAULLO
APR 25 SUN - 2:00 TO 5:00 PM
NEW MONEY MAKING SAUSAGE 5. ITALIAN SALAMI PEPPERONI LIVERWURST (GERMAN LIVER SAUSAGE) THAI HOT SAUSAGE, ILOCOS LONGANIZA BONUS FRENCH GARLIC SAUSAGE P 980. BY LENI R. ARAULLO (INCLUDES ACTUAL SMOKING METHOD)
APR 26 MON 2:30 TO 6:15 PM
LIGHT & AIRY ENSAYMADAS; CHEESEROLLS, SPECIAL EGG PANDESAL PANDESAL W/ FILLING CINNAMON ROLLS BREAD BAKING MADE EASY! P 980.
APR 27 TUE - 2:30 TO 5:30 PM MAX STYLE FRIED CHICKEN; JOLLIBEE STYLE CHICKEN WITH GRAVY CHICKEN BURGER DELICIOUS POTATO SALAD SIZZLING GRILLED PORKCHOPS 4 SEASONS PUNCH RIPE MANGO JUICE, MELON TAPIOCA W/ SAGO, GREEN MANGO JUICE P980.
APR 30 FRI 2:30 TO 5:30PM OPEN A PIZZA PARLOR, LEARN TO MAKE THESE ITALIAN FAVORITES MOZZARELLA TOPPED BIG & THICK CRUST PIZZA(BAKED IN A RECTANGULAR PAN) THIN CRUST PIZZA W/ DIFF TOPPINGS FETTUCINE ALFEDO SPAGHETTI CARBONARA BREADED VEAL STEAKS W/ LEMON PEACH FILLED CREPES WITH FRUIT SAUCE PLUS 12 BONUS RECIPES OF PASTAS AND SANDWICHES P980.
MAY 1 SAT 1:30 TO 5:00 PM CAKE DECORATING FOR BEGINNERS II USING WILTON CARTOON CHARACTER PANS ON REAL CAKES. (14 YRS OLD & ABOVE) BOB THE BUILDER TIGGER SNOWMAN T SHIRT STRAWBERRY P980. BY LENI R. ARAULLO (STAR & ROUND TIPS/PIPING BAG AVAILABLE FOR SALE AT COST OR BRING YOU OWN)
MAY 2 SUN 2:00 TO 5:00 PM - MONEY-MAKING SAUSAGES COURSE 3 LEARN 7 OF YOUR FAVORITE FOOTLONG HOTDOGS BEEF SAUSAGE JERKY USING WPPY CASING USED FOR HOTDOG-MAKING WHOLE CORNED BEEF SERVED IN FIVE STAR HOTELS & RESTAURANTS PORK HAMONADO & BEEF DE RECADO THE BEST PAMPANGO TOCINO LONGANIZA LUCBAN P 980.
BY LENI R. ARAULLO
MAY 3 & 17 MON 2:30 TO 5:30 PM - MAKE MONEY BY LEARNING 15 DELICIOUS RECIPES IN TWO LESONS. P1,500, INCLUDING INGREDIENTS A SPECIAL FRUITCAKE 3 VERSIONS OF BROWNIES (DOUBLE CHOCOLATE FUDGE, CHOCO CARAMEL FUDGE WALNUT-TOPPED DARK & LIGHT BARS) 5 DIFF KINDS OF WELL-KNOWN MUFFINS 5 DIFF KINDS OF CHOCOLATE CHIP COOKIES MACADAMIA NUT COOKIES FOR TEENAGERS & ABOVE
MAY 4 TUE 2:30 TO 6:15 PM - LEARN THE SOFTEST SIOPAO DOUGH EVER! THE MOST DELICIOUS SIOMAI KUA PAO (PEKING SIOPAO W/ MEAT FILLING & PICKLED MUSTASA) FISH HEAD SOUP CAMARON RELLENADO DUFIAM W/ RADISH SALAD STEAMED LAPULAPU P 980.
MAY 5 WED 2:30 TO 5:30 PM - 8 CHOCOLATE CANDY-MAKING MADE EASY FOR CHILDREN 7 TO 14 YEARS OLD. P980. MOLDED CHOCOLATES WITH NUT CENTERS STRAWBERRY ROSE SHELLS FILLED WITH ICE CREAM DIPPED COOKIES MARSHMALLOWS DIPPED IN CHOCOLATE WITH MINT CREAM CENTERS CHOCOLATE TURTLES - PLAIN & DRIZZLED
MAY 7 FRI 2:30 TO 5:30 PM - VERY FLAKY PORTUGUESE (MACAO) STYLE TARTS. CASUY LANGKA MACAPUNO MANGO UBE TARTS EMPANADA WITH SWEET FILLING HAM-CHEESE EMPANADITAS FOR BAKESHOP OR HOME BUSINESS P 980.
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	Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner
MONDAY	*Pandesal* with *kesong puti* Bottled gourmet *tuyo* Coffee, chocolate or iced tea Papaya with calamansi	Pork *adobo* *Gisadong sitaw* Rice Sweetened garbanzos	Chicken *afritada* with potatoes and bell pepper Rice *Camote cue*
TUESDAY	Scrambled eggs with ham and cheese Loaf bread Coffee, chocolate or papaya shake	Beef *bulalo* with corn, *pechay* and *chorizo* Rice Avocado with milk and *sago*	Fried *mayamaya* *Gisadong togue* Rice *Buko* sherbet
WEDNESDAY	Garlic rice Chicken *tocino* Coffee, chocolate or iced tea Bananas with yogurt topping	Roast chicken Potato salad Rice Refrigerator cake	Pork *menudo* Rice Mini banana *turon* with *langka*
MAUNDY THURSDAY	Cereal and milk with sliced bananas, raisins and a dash of cinnamon *Embutido* Cheddar cheese Loaf bread Carrot juice or iced tea	Salad greens with store bought bottled dressing Clam (*halaan*) chowder Seafood pizza turnover Mocha ice cream with coffee jelly	Fried *lapulapu* with fresh tomato sauce Steamed asparagus or Baguio beans with butter sauce Rice Chilled star apple
GOOD FRIDAY	*Daing na bangus* *Pandan* rice Coffee, chocolate or iced tea Ripe mangoes	Seviche Grilled squid Rice *Pichi pichi*	Fresh *pako* salad with tomatoes, toasted *dilis* and vinaigrette Bacalao (Spanish fish stew) French bread or *pandesal* *Leche flan*
BLACK SATURDAY	Chinese congee with fish fillet and leeks Hot tea or ginger brew Fresh fruit platter	*Pesang daing na labahita* with *upo* Vegetable tempura Rice White *gulaman* with fruit cocktail	Steamed fish with black beans Steamed *kangkong* with *bagoong* dip Rice Chilled wedges of melon
EASTER SUNDAY	Waffles or hotcake with butter and maple syrup Crispy bacon Coffee, chocolate or iced tea	Paella Pork barbecue Fruit salad	Beef stew Rice Banana cream pie

Meatless dishes for Lent and beyond

From page D1

fer the shaped *calzones* into greased baking sheets. Bake at 450°F for about 10 minutes or until light golden-brown.

Seviche (Spanish Kilawin)

½ kg fresh fish fillet (*lapulapu* or *tanguingue*)
½ c *sukang paombong*
2 tbsp calamansi juice
2 tbsp *sukang paombong*
1 tsp olive or corn oil
1 tsp salt
½ tsp fish sauce (*patis*)
Freshly ground black pepper to taste
1 head lettuce, torn into pieces and chilled
2 tbsp finely chopped white onions
2 tbsp finely chopped tomatoes
1 tsp finely chopped ginger
½ c *singkamas*, cut into strips and chilled
1 cup pomelo (*suha*) chunks, chilled

Wash the fish fillet in cold running water. Cut into chunks and transfer to a glass or stainless mixing bowl. Pour in ½ c native vinegar and allow to stand at room temperature for at least 30 minutes. The fish will become white. Drain the fish and transfer to another glass or stainless bowl. Pour in the calamansi juice, native vinegar, olive oil, fine salt, *patis* and black pepper. Mix well and refrigerate for at least 30 minutes.

When ready to serve, arrange lettuce leaves on a serving platter. Top with the cold marinated fish. Garnish with *singkamas* and chunks of pomelo.

Fried Lapu-lapu with Fresh Tomato Sauce (Cardillo)

½ kg fish fillet (*lapu-lapu*, *labahita* or any white fish)
½ c gin
All-purpose flour
Beaten egg
Japanese bread crumbs (*panko*)
Oil for frying
Sauce:
1/3 c olive oil or corn oil
¼ c pounded garlic
1 c chopped onions
4 c chopped tomatoes
2½ tsp salt
Freshly ground black pepper to taste
1 pc bay leaf (laurel)
½ tsp Spanish paprika (pimenton)
½ c water
2 eggs, well beaten

Wash the fish fillet in cold running water. Slice into strips or chunks. Marinate in gin for 15 minutes. Discard the gin.

Coat the fish fillets with flour, dip in beaten egg and roll in breadcrumbs. Fry until light golden brown. Drain on paper lined plates and arrange on a serving platter. Keep warm.

To prepare the sauce, sauté the garlic, onions and tomatoes in olive oil. Season with salt, black pepper, laurel and paprika. Add the water. Allow to boil, then simmer for 5-10 minutes. Discard the laurel. Remove from heat. Quickly pour in the beaten egg in thin streams while mixing the sauce vigorously.

Pour over the fried fish. Serve piping hot.

Dorothy MJ Ferreria offers cooking, baking and cake decorating classes at Dorothy's Cooking School in Quezon City, at the Julius Maggi Kitchen in Makati and in key provincial cities. For classes in Manila, call 7217735 or e-mail dorothyferreria@skyinet.net. For classes in Bacolod this month, contact (034) 4340445.

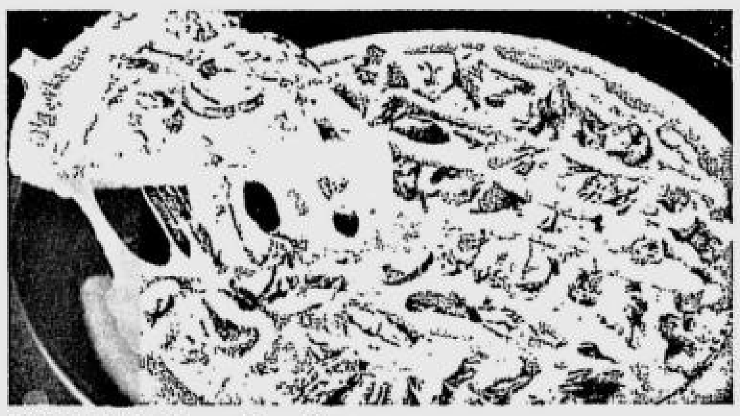
Limited-edition pizza

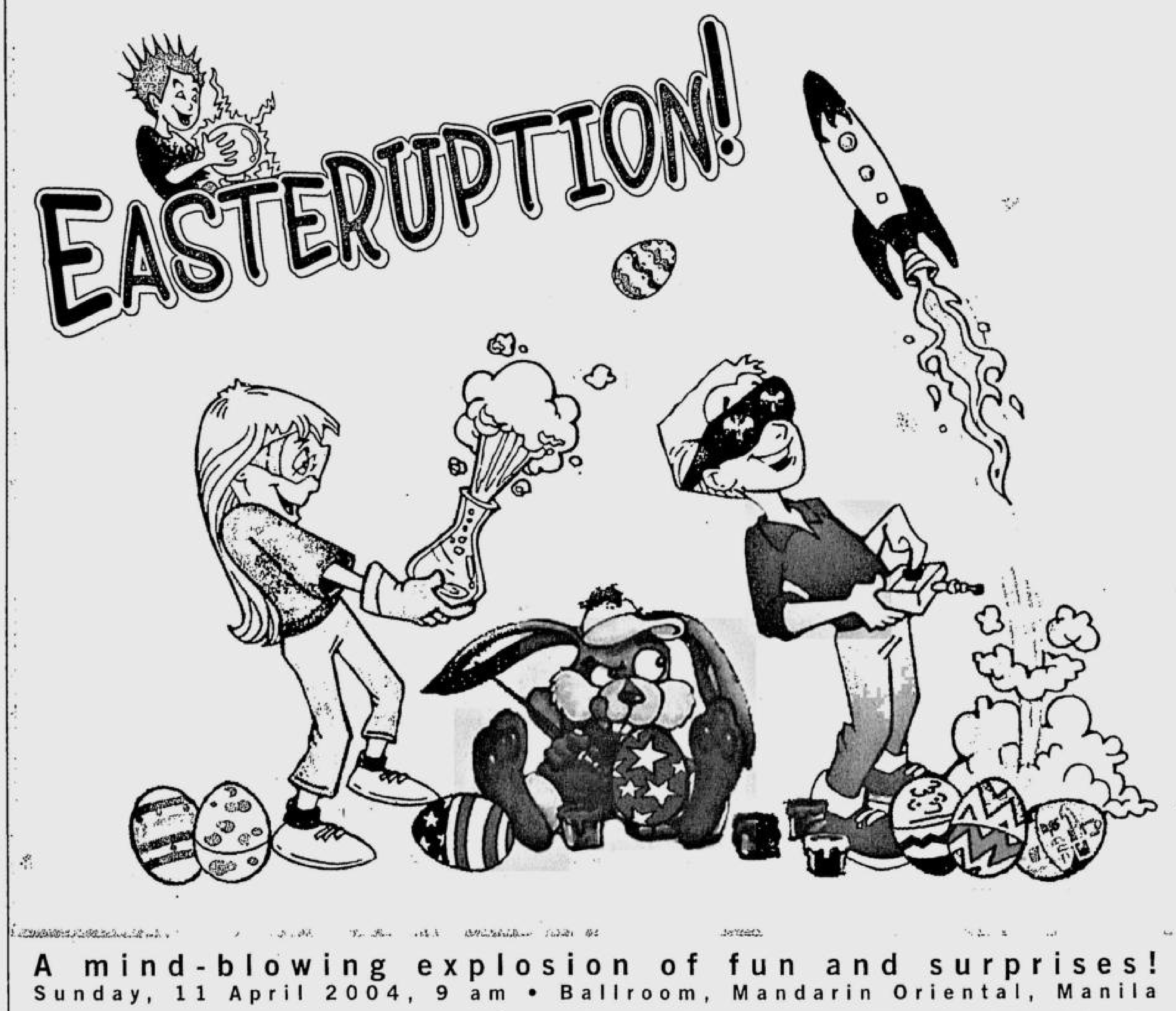
PIZZA Hut marks Lent with a one-of-a-kind, all-new Cheesy Tuna Pizza. The just-for-Lent pizza combines cheese and the meat-like goodness of tuna. It is the restaurant's answer to pizza cravings during the Lenten season.

The pizza, featuring tuna flakes and mushrooms covered in cheese, is available in favorite crusts—Pan Pizza, Cheesy Crust and Stuffed Crust Pizza.

Cheesy Tuna Pan Pizza is available for P185 (regular size). Upgrades to Cheesy Crust can be made for an additional P65 and to Stuffed Crust for P85 more. The offer is only available until April 12.

Rush to your nearest Pizza Hut outlet or dial 9111111 for delivery and bulk orders.


PIZZA Hut's Cheesy Tuna Pizza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Ticket prices for brunch at Tin Hau and Paseo Uno (P1280++adult/P640++ child 5-12 years) and The Tivoli (P1450++adult/P725++child 5-12 years) include Easteruption show and games.

For a holiday respite, book our Easter room package for local residents, inclusive of breakfast for two and a ticket to Easteruption. Packages begin at P3,400++.

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ENROLL at The Maya Kitchen Culinary Arts Center and learn how to prepare a feast fit for a king.

Serve Fastfood Bestsellers like Chicken Caldereta, Pork Estofado, Lomi, Fresh Eggroll, Embutido, Chicken Pork Barbecue 3-way and Special Palabok. This class is on April 3, 9 a.m.-4 p.m.

On the same day at 1:30-5 p.m., learn how to prepare Barchow like Baked Tahong, Hot Shrimp Gambas, Tuna Balls, Fish Kinilaw, Pork Sisig, Nilasing na Hipon, Calamares, Mushroom in Garlic Butter and Chicken Feet.

For those who are truly passionate about cooking and want some in-depth classes, there's Cooking I (Basic) on April 20-23, Tuesday-Friday, 9 a.m. Lessons include instructions on proper hygiene, sanitation and safety, nutrition and nutritional cooking, stocks, soups and sauces, and its 1001 application to poultry, fish, shellfish, fruits and vegetables, common herbs and spices; purchasing, marketing and proper storage, menu planning, simple garnish and plate presentation, plus actual cooking workshop on the preparation of dishes from appetizer to dessert.

Parents can also enroll their kids at Maya Kitchen. Summer Culinary Classes for boys and girls aged 6-10 years old is on April 20-21, with a second batch on May 11-12, from 8:30 a.m.-12 nn. For teens, there's the Young People's Cook-In on April 22-24, with a second batch on May 13-15, 9 a.m.-1 p.m.

Visit Maya Kitchen (Tuesday to Saturday) at the 8/F, Liberty Building, A. Arnaiz Avenue (Pasay Road), Makati City. Call 8921185/5011 local 108 or e-mail mayakitchen@pacific.net.ph.

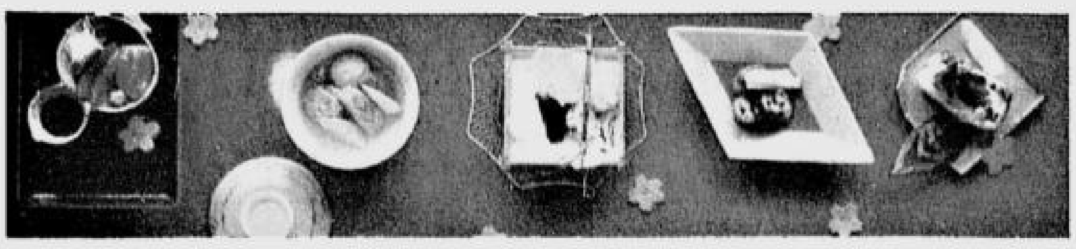
Summer classes in cooking, baking

DOROTHY'S Cooking School starts summer vacation classes with a series of hands-on sessions for children and teeners at the Julius Maggi Kitchen, Nestlé Building, Rockwell, Makati City on April 12, 14, 16, 21 and 23. Classes include I Can Cook Breakfast, Who Stole the Cookie from the Cookie Jar, No-bake Delights, Asian Platter and A Taste of Italy. All classes are held 2-5 pm.

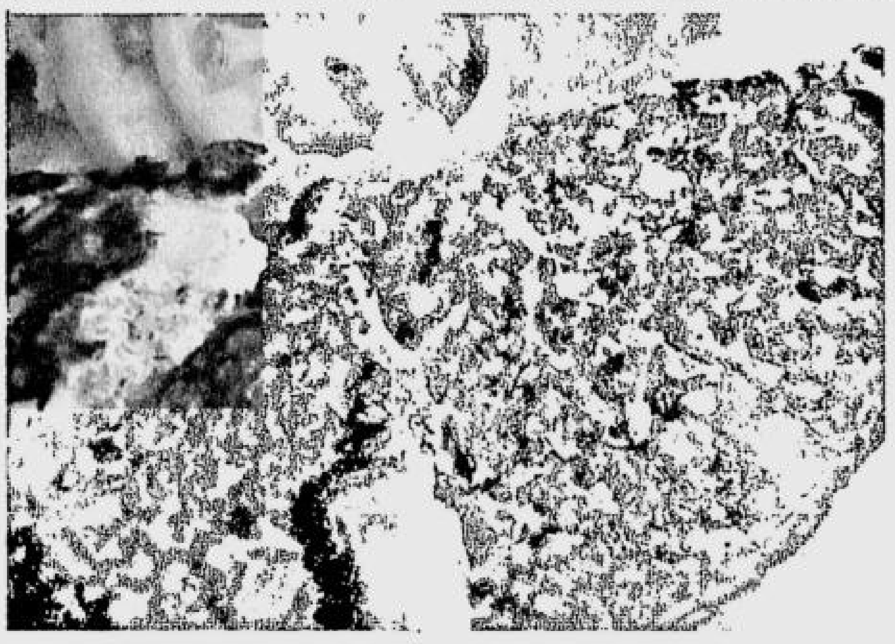
Whole day hands-on classes for beginners, April 17 and 19 at Dorothy's Cooking School in Quezon City, will feature popular breads like *siopao*, *pandesal* and *ensaymada*. Baking demonstrations featuring quickbreads and drunken cakes, chocolate desserts and basic baking are scheduled April 13, 15 and 22.

A three-day hands-on workshop on fondant cakes in miniature will be held May 5-7.

Call 7217735.



MAKATI Shangri-La's Inagiku presents the Sakura Bento Box Festival today until April 15. Shang Palace, on the other hand, offers low Calorie Feast on April 5-18. The April cake of the month is Crunchy Cashew Nut Chocolate Mousse. Call 8400884.



GLOBAL Café by Store Super offers breakfast choices like Pancake with Mango Sauce or Ham and Cheese-filled French toast with sweet orange butter, Spinach Quiche, Shiitake Mushroom Soufflé Omelet, Corned Beef Hash Wedges, Steak and Eggs with caramelized onions and sautéed potatoes. Global Café is located at the first level of Greenbelt 3, Ayala Center, Makati.

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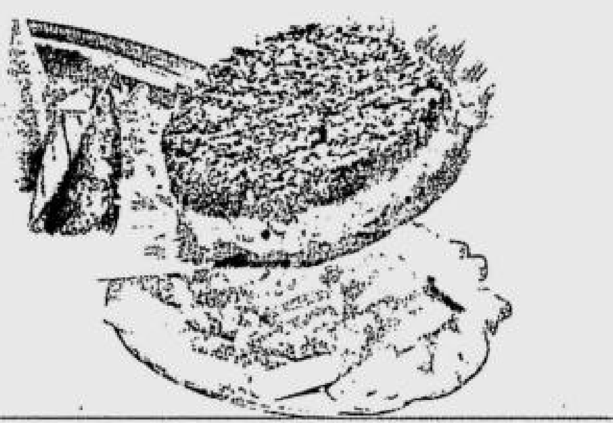

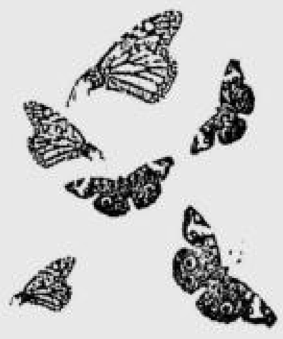

The Department of Tourism introduces the Biyaheng Singko-singko, the most affordable escapade this summer! At a very low 555 pesos*, you and your family can explore different hot destinations. It's the bus trip you don't wanna miss!

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Shop till you drop at the duty free shops, tour around Hilaga, Clark Museum and Fontana and satisfy your taste buds with Pampanga's delectable dishes.

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LAGUNA
Visit the shrine of Rizal, tour significant places like the IRRI Riceworld and Gintong Talulot Farm then take a break at the Monte Vista Hotsprings & Conference Resort.

CAVITE
Visit the historic Aguinaldo Shrine at Kawit, Cavite and the GBR museum. Then cool down and unwind at the Island Cove Resort & Leisure Park.

BULACAN
Delight your senses with the sight of colorful butterflies at the Butterfly Haven and C & B Orchid Farm, contemplate within the historic Barasoain Church, take a walk around Casa Real and take a refreshing dip at 8 Waves Waterpark in San Rafael.

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April 18 – Bulacan & Pampanga

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* per head ** Important: Payments should be made two (2) working days before the trip at Room 417 DOT Building, T.M. Kalaw, Ermita, Manila

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DTI intensifies drive against pyramiding

THE CONSUMER

Marietta Velasco Giron

IN THE FOLLOWING days, we shall find out just how determined the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) is in its supposedly intensified drive against pyramiding. DTI created recently a special legal team to speed up the evaluation of complaints and the filing of cases against suspected pyramiding firms.

The new team will be headed by Trade Undersecretary Adrian S. Cristobal Jr., who is in charge of both Consumer Welfare and Legal Affairs. "We will assist regional and provincial arbitration officers in processing pyramiding cases in their jurisdiction," Cristobal said.

He added, "We have also been coordinating with the Securities and Exchange Commission so that we are constantly updated on the status of cases that are under our respective jurisdictions."

But what is expected to boost the department's anti-pyramiding drive is the agreement between DTI and the Direct Selling Association of the Philippines (DSAP) to share information and database. They will also launch an education campaign to inform consumers about get-rich investment frauds.

DSAP will also teach its members how to spot pyramiding scams. The members will, in turn, share their know-how with prospective direct sellers.

Also planned is a DTI-DSAP secretariat that will process complaints and inquiries on pyramiding.

Cristobal urged the public to call the special legal team at DTI hotlines 897DTI and 8118231 for complaints or inquiries about suspected pyramiding fraud. Questions and relevant inquiries may also be sent by cellular phone, text DTI# text message and send to 2920.

Reader seeks help

R. Mendoza (bobmendoza@hotmail.com) wrote: "I am one of those people who invested in Multitel. Since the arrest of Rose Baladjay, however, we have not heard any news on the progress of the case (or if it is progressing at all). We don't know if we should still hope that our money will be returned. We are no longer interested in getting the earnings of our investment. Our primary concern is to recover our investment. I am hoping that you or someone can give us an update on the Multitel case."

We advise Mendoza to contact the hotlines of DTI's special legal team.

Fedex customer complains

Eleanor B. Muscat related her disappointment with Fedex service. She said last Feb. 10, she sent a cellular phone to her mother in New York by Fedex service (Tracking No. 8446375 to 5818). When her mother opened the package, however, she found out that the cell phone lens was damaged.

"I advised my mother to complain to the nearest Fedex center in New York," Muscat said. "Without much ado, the NY staff gave her Claim No. 0218405367 and advised her to file a claim in the Philippine office where the package originated."

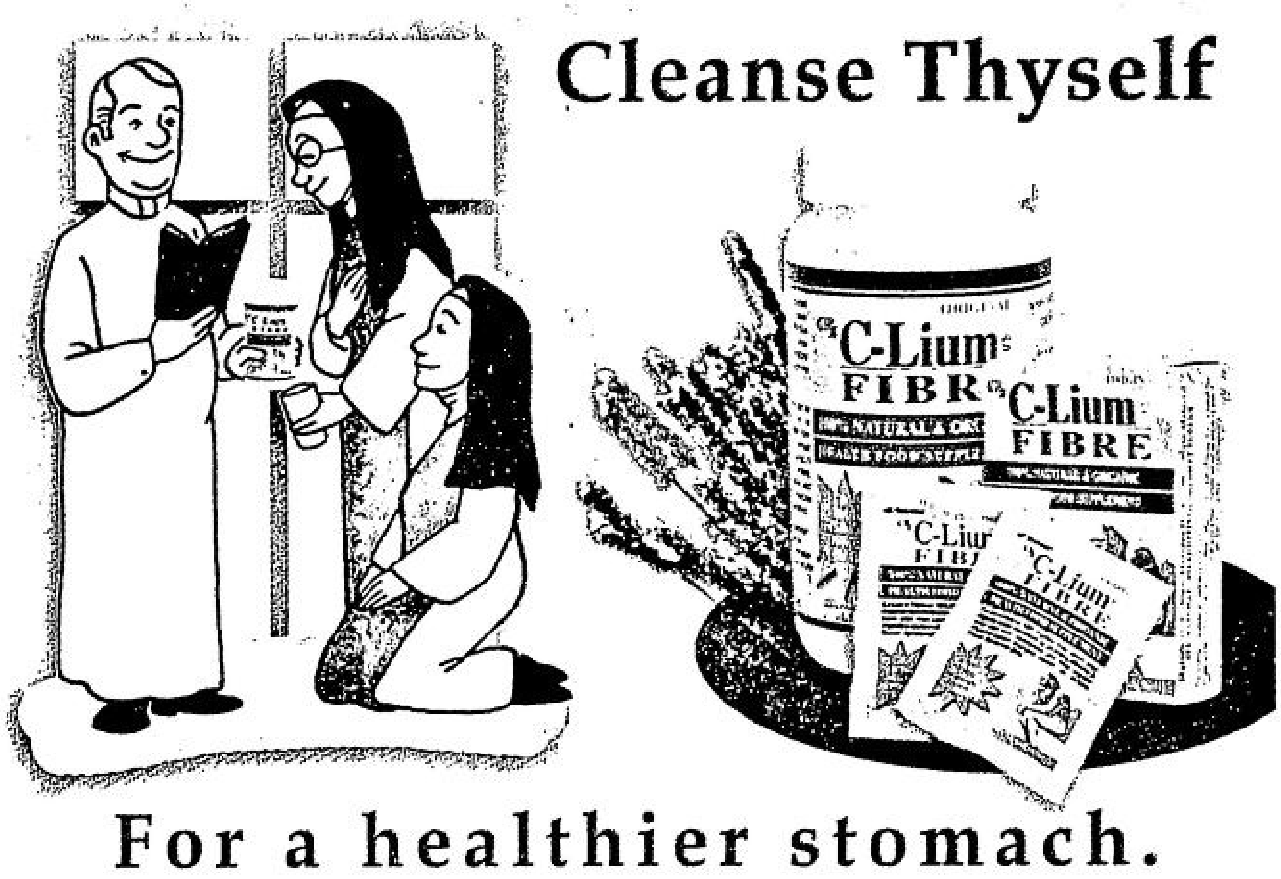
She recounted her frustrations as she followed up the claim at the Fedex Philippines head office. She said, for one month, she was given the run around by the local staff and, on several occasions, her calls were put on hold for unbearable lengths of time. Eventually, someone from Fedex trace division informed her her claim was denied because: "There was no visible damage on the outer box."

Muscat complained, "Fedex Philippines declared it in good condition when it left the country, so I don't really know where the lens was damaged. The fact is I paid a hefty sum for the service including insurance cost. Furthermore, as a valued customer of Fedex, I expected better treatment."

Fedex Philippines customer service staff explained that all packages—whether these were dropped off by customer at company stations or picked up by messenger—were checked inside and out to make sure the contents and documentation were in order. The packages were checked again at the export division prior to dispatch.

We forwarded copies of Muscat's complaint to the following Fedex divisions that are now looking into the problem: hpdeguzman@af2100.com; cealvarez@af2100.com; pbantonio@af2100.com

E-mail the author at mgiron@i-manila.com.ph



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Couple bound by shared passion for food

FOR chef Philip Golding and wife Sharlene, food paved the way to romantic love, which culminated in a wedding in May of 1995 and produced two healthy sons, Marcus and William.

The Goldings are instructors at the Center for Culinary Arts, Manila (CCA). He is the chief examiner/assessor and vice president of the Culinary Education Foundation (CEF), which grants scholarships at CCA to deserving students. She teaches Restaurant Service Operation.

Philip has been with CCA since 1997. Every graduate of CCA has to pass the competency examination he administers to get their diploma. Sharlene introduces the students to the service and dining aspects of a restaurant, stressing good cooking has to be complemented by proper presentation and serving of dishes.

PHILIP Golding and wife Sharlene

The Goldings met in 1994, when Sharlene, a Communication graduate of Miriam College, went to England to study at the Institute of Hospitality Management and English Studies (Ihmes).

In England, Sharlene decided to take up Hotel Management instead. As a management trainee in Forte Crest Hotel, she was assigned to the Oriental kitchen. Philip was then chef patron of Tutto's, the hotel's Mediterranean kitchen.

Philip says his family's creativity and interest in good food made him go into culinary arts. His uncle is a bartender and his mother a florist.

Their meeting was a "shattering" experience. Sharlene was carrying a tray full of glasses, when she slipped in front of him.

In 1997, the couple decided to settle in the Philippines. Philip, who likes beaches, said the decision was for the sake of the family because he did not want his son to be a stranger to his mother's country. He was amazed not only with the country's people but also its cuisine.

Meeting people who shared his interest in food, he became the chef/food operations director of Paper Moon and Fashion Café and chef patron of Azzurro.

The chef sought to uplift the standards of culinary practices in the Philippines through proper attitude, focus and discipline. At CCA, Manila he stresses the need to use quality ingredients.

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MAKATI	ORTIGAS	QUEZON CITY	SHAW	ALABANG	BINONDO	CONGRESSIONAL	PAMPANGA	CEBU
816 1259	687 2196	372 6633	534 7701/02	842 1144	243 8138/39	920 7938	961 3404/08	233 7631
815 3121	687 2197	372 6634	717 0076	809 9583	243 8602	920 7992	860 2663/64	233 7633/35

OPENING HOURS. MON-FRI: 8:00AM-7:00PM . SAT. 8:00AM-5:00PM
www.facialcarecentre.com.ph
Per DTI-NCR Permit #1152, Series of 2004